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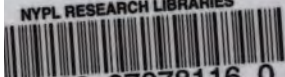
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CEYLON.

Area in Square Miles 24,500
Population 1,346,824
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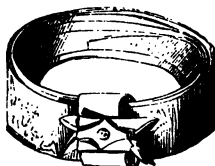
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SOUTH INDIAN SKETCHES;

CONTAINING
A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF SOME OF THE
MISSIONARY STATIONS,
CONNECTED WITH THE
CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN SOUTHERN INDIA.
IN LETTERS TO A YOUNG FRIEND.

BY S. TUCKER.

PART I.
MADRAS AND MAYAVERAM.



NATIVE LETTER.

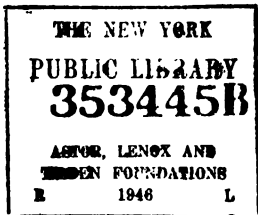
THE PROFITS WILL BE APPROPRIATED TO NATIVE EDUCATION.

Third Edition.

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MACINTOSH, PRINTER,
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P R E F A C E.

THE proposed object of this little publication is, to combine a few details of every-day life in India with a slight sketch of the religious state of the Hindoos and the labours of Missionaries, so as to bring those distant scenes more clearly to the mind of the youthful reader; and awaken a more intelligent and lively interest in the spiritual welfare of our Heathen fellow-subjects. The writer sends it forth, with the earnest hope and prayer, that He, whose strength is made perfect in our weakness, may be pleased to bless this humble effort for the extension of His kingdom.

*Southborough,
April 2nd, 1842.*

P R E F A C E
TO THE THIRD EDITION.

SINCE this volume was originally written, several changes have taken place at the different Missionary stations; but as these do not affect the general information contained in it, it has been thought better only to insert the more important of them in notes.

Hampstead,
April 3d, 1848.

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SOUTH INDIAN
MISSIONARY SKETCHES.

LETTER I.

MY DEAR LUCY,

You tell me that though you feel so deep an interest in Missions, and especially in those of Southern India, yet your knowledge of the customs and habits of the natives, and indeed of the whole state of things there, is so vague, that you cannot enter as fully as you would wish into the accounts which are from time to time published; and I shall therefore rejoice, if my present attempt to bring forward a few similar details and every-day occurrences, shall in any degree remove your difficulty, and enable you to form a

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more connected and *realizing* idea of those distant scenes.

You must, however, bear in mind, that I only intend to give you "sketches," and you must not therefore expect any regular account of the progress of the Gospel in those lands, nor even of its more important features, as you can find these in the regular publications.

I shall confine myself to those facts in Missionary work which have come under the personal knowledge of the friends from whom I have received my information ; and even of these, I shall, as far as is practicable, refrain from repeating what has been already published. Nor shall I touch upon any subjects of general information, unless they also, in some way or other, affect the duties or the feelings of a Missionary.

I will begin by endeavouring to give you some notion, although a very faint one, of the impression made upon a European on the first arriving at these unknown shores. And I will suppose that, after a long and wearying voyage of nearly four months, during which you have seen nothing but sea and sky, except, perhaps, catching sight of the picturesque rock of Martin de Vas, or of the low wooded shore and distant mountains of Ceylon, you are drawing near the place of your destination, and are running up the coast of Coromandel.

J. F. V. N.

St. Thomas Mount, eight miles below Madras, is just in sight, with our national flag floating from the flag-staff; and it will awaken an indescribable emotion to find it is giving notice of your approach, and, as it were, recognising and greeting yourself and your companions with an English welcome from the shores of India.

How many thoughts will rush into your mind, and make you for the moment forget the present scene, till you are startled by seeing the ship surrounded by strange looking little rafts, with stranger looking men upon them, whose sudden appearance makes you almost fancy that they must have sprung from the bottom of the sea.

The men are slight in form, their complexion nearly black, and their only clothing is a conical cap of palmyra leaf, and a cloth twisted round the waist; and while you are wondering what they are, and whence they came, they have scrambled up the sides, and are on deck.

These rafts, or "Catamarans," are in rough weather the only means of communication between the shore and the vessels in the roads; they are made of three or four logs of wood rudely lashed together,* almost in the form of the sole of a shoe, as you will see by the accompanying wood-cut.

* Catamaran literally means "tied trees."



With the letters safely lodged between the outer and inner lining of their palmyra caps, which are so closely woven as to be water-proof, and with two slight paddles instead of oars, the men fearlessly mount their little bark, and set out on what would to us be indeed a perilous expedition. Frequently the Catamaran is just below the surface of the water; and you doubtless will remember how Bishop Heber was struck with the singular effect of the men appearing as if they were walking or standing on the sea; but the effect is perhaps still more singular, when, as is sometimes the case, they are seen rowing on their knees.

Sometimes an unexpected wave oversets them, the man disappears, and you fear he must be lost;

but in a few moments he rises, regains the little raft, which has in the mean time righted itself, and is again standing on it as unconcerned as if nothing had happened. In fact, the waves are not such dangerous enemies as the sharks; and many a sad tale might be told of the loss of life and limb from these voracious monsters.

Meanwhile you are steadily making way, and soon find the approach of your ship again announced by the Union Jack from Fort St. George.

Presently you see it lowered, and three bright flags of red and blue are hoisted to ask her name—the answer is given from the stern; and perhaps the swelling sails may at first intercept the sight, and the inquiry is still continued. At last the answer is distinguished, the inquiring signals at the flag-staff are quickly changed for those which give your number; and you will one day know with what anxious interest these floating signals are watched and waited for by friends on shore.

These, after remaining some little time, are taken down, and the Union Jack of England again waves to claim your homage to England's Queen,—by the providence of God the Sovereign Lady of this vast country.

During this time the ship has come to anchor among vessels from every quarter of the globe; and you see before you a line of level coast stretching

as far as your eye can reach to north and south. Nearly opposite to you are Fort St. George, and the long low range of buildings that form the sea front of Black Town. Behind the fort and town, particularly towards the north, you will observe the tops of trees widely differing in form and foliage from any you before have seen; and your eye will especially be attracted by the graceful cocoa-nut calmly waving its light and feathery foliage to every breath of wind. The sky is clear and bright, and the peculiar perfume with which the air is loaded, will prove to you that "Sabeian odours from the spicy shore," are not "an idle vaunt of song."

Soon a "Massouli boat," with its apparently unwieldy form, high above the water, will be seen approaching: these boats are made of planks sewed together with fibres of the cocoa-nut, pointed at both ends, and rowed by long poles with heart-shaped paddles, an extra one supplying the place of a rudder.

Unwieldy as they appear, they are in reality the only vessels that will withstand the force of the surf peculiar to this coast, for a boat of European make would immediately be dashed to pieces if it attempted to approach the shore.

Several of the Massouli boats soon reach the ship loaded with provisions of various kinds; and you will enjoy the sight and taste of the fresh bread, the

eggs, the butter, of which you have been so long deprived ; and, above all, the beautiful plantains and other fruits so new to an English eye.

Perhaps among the boats will be one painted red, and more neatly fitted up than the others—it is an “Accommodation boat” for passengers, with an awning over the stern, and some brushwood at the bottom. Perhaps, too, it may bring the friend who is expecting you : and glad to escape from the ship, and delighted at the prospect of again treading on dry land, you seat yourself beside him.

At first you will be startled, at finding yourself among men almost as strange in their appearance and as scantily clothed as the Catamaran men, from whom just before you had shrunk almost in terror, and still more, when, at the moment they push off from the ship, they begin a wild and dismal kind of chant. This they continue till the boat reaches the outer line of the breakers, when the chant grows louder and quicker, till it becomes a sort of yell ; and you must have strong nerves if you are not frightened at these sounds of pretended fear, and at the looks of terror which accompany them.

As you approach the breakers, the boatmen with great dexterity contrive so to place the boat as that she shall rise with the wave, and when at the top, they dash as quickly as they can into the trough below, to get as far as possible from the wave before

it breaks ; not, however, that you must expect to get quite beyond its reach ; you will doubtless have a sprinkling, and it will be well if you escape a complete wetting.

The first danger passed, the men lower their voices to their former pitch ; but as you approach the second wave you are again frightened and almost deafened, by their resuming the frightful look and shout. This, however, is passed as the former ; and the third carries you high and dry on the beach, where a chair is ready for you ; and in a few moments you feel once more the ground firm beneath your feet.

And now you are in India ! that land so full of interest and of hope. But here I will leave you for the present.

Yours affectionately,
S. T.

LETTER II.

YES, my dear Lucy, you are in India, but surrounded by a crowd of busy-tongued natives, and half-bewildered by all the new sights and sounds which meet you on every side, you will scarcely know where you are, and will gladly put yourself under the direction of your more experienced friend to be taken to your future abode. Here you are sure of a cordial and warm-hearted reception ; and you find what abundant cause of gratitude you have, not only for having been safely carried through the perils and dangers of the sea, but likewise for having been brought among friends who have retained their English hearts and English habits in this distant land.

Everything else, however, will be new and strange ; and it will take some little time before you are reconciled to the absence of many things, which have always been associated in your mind with the idea of *comfort*. The rooms are spacious and lofty, but the want of chimneys—the large windows without glass—and the chunam floors,

merely covered with mats, give them at first a cheerless and unfurnished appearance.

These things are, however, well suited to the climate ; and so are the wide verandahs round the house, into which the rooms all open, and the outside blinds, called *tats*, made of the sweet-scented cuscus grass, which during the hot winds are placed against the verandah or the window, and having water constantly thrown upon them from without, cool and perfume the wind as it passes through.

There are, too, some things that you will at once enjoy—and the quiet movements of the native servants, with the “noiseless tread” of their uncovered feet, as they glide from room to room, will give you a feeling of repose, the more grateful from its contrast to the noise inseparable from a ship at sea.

The dress of the men-servants consists of an under garment of muslin, which hangs in folds below the knee, and over this, a dress of white country cloth, tight at the throat and wrists, and sometimes confined by a red sash tied round the waist, with the ends hanging down at the side. Fifteen or twenty yards of white or red muslin are twisted round the head for a turban ; but how they can contrive to dispose of all this quantity I cannot imagine.

When you retire to your own apartment, fresh novelties await you. The bedstead has no hangings, except the gauze musquito curtains ; and the posts

stand in pans of water, to prevent the ants from paying you a visit in the night. The "ayah," who has been provided for you, is so different in her appearance from the servant who waited on you at home, that you can scarcely believe her office is the same. A short jacket of native chintz with sleeves half-way down towards the elbow, is nearly concealed by a "cloth" of thick white muslin, bordered with red, eight or nine yards long, and two and a-half in breadth, which, after being put once or twice round the waist, is gracefully thrown over and across the shoulders, so as to cover the whole person except the arms and feet. So skilfully do they manage this cloth, that though it has neither string, nor pin, nor any fastening but its own folds, you never see it disarranged; and a nurse will carry or play with a child the whole day, without displacing any part of the dress, so becoming to their slender and well-proportioned figures.

The countenances of the young women are very pleasing, and their large dark eyes are full of feeling and expression; but the hard lives they lead, and their frequent exposure to the sun, soon deprive the lower and middling classes of every trace of beauty. They are all very fond of ornaments, and generally wear two in each ear, with rings on their fingers and toes, and chains round their necks; and some have bracelets, and jingling bangles round their

ankles. On grand occasions, they wear an ornament in the nose, resting on the upper lip, and a round plate at the back of the head, or adorn their jet black hair with white or yellow flowers.

Among the very poor, these ornaments are made of brass and coloured glass, but they improve in proportion to the station of the wearer, and are very splendid in the higher classes. The wife of a wealthy native will be almost covered with jewels, and her dress will be of the richest texture, often woven or embroidered with gold and silver.

These ornaments, or "joys," as they are called, are highly valued by all ranks ; indeed it is, as in patriarchal times, a mode of investing money, and any loss of them becomes a serious misfortune. The "joys" of one of the servants at the Mission-house were one night stolen, and it was touching to see the grief of the whole family. The children were all sobbing and moaning, and the father was greatly agitated ; but the mother was, in eastern fashion, quite frantic,—she threw herself on the ground, and then against the wall, just as a servant would beat a door-mat against a post.

You can hardly see these ornaments without recalling "the tinkling ornaments for the feet," "the round tires like the moon,"—"the rings and the nose jewels," mentioned in the third chapter of Isaiah. Indeed, there is much in the every day

scenes of all eastern countries that illustrates expressions in the Scriptures. The wells near Madras have a low circular wall built nearly round them, broad enough for a person to sit upon;* and in your evening drives you may often see the women passing to and fro with their brass chatties on their heads, or a flock of sheep or goats waiting to be watered.†



WOMAN WITH CHATTY.

* John iv. 6.

† Gen. xxix. 2, 3.

A gentleman told me, that he was one day reading Gen. xxiv. with his moonshee (or native teacher of languages), when coming to the 15th verse, the man observed: "Rebekah must have been a high caste woman."—"How do you know?"—"Because she carried the pitcher on her shoulder, the low castes always carry burdens on their heads."

The skins of water slung across the backs of oxen, will remind you of the bottle that was laid on the shoulder of Hagar; and if you were to watch the gardeners watering the Mission garden, you would understand the meaning of being "watered by the foot."* The well in the garden has the usual low wall nearly round it, and against this is fixed a "picotta," *i. e.*, a strong upright piece of wood, at the top of which a long pole is fastened in the middle, so as to swing up and down. One end of this pole is much larger than the other, and to the smaller end an iron bucket is suspended by means of a slip of bamboo, twenty or twenty-five feet long. One man climbs up the upright piece, and placing himself on the middle of the horizontal pole, treads alternately backwards and forwards; by this means raising and sinking the bucket, while another stands on the ground ready to empty it into a channel cut to receive it. I ought to have told you, that the

* Deut. xi. 10.

whole garden is divided into beds and borders by small shallow channels, and through these the water is conveyed over the whole garden by a third man, who guides it aright by opening or closing a passage for it with his "foot." The gardens are watered in this manner every evening; and the soft and pleasant song of the gardener, as he fearlessly paces up and down in his insecure position, is doubly welcome, at the end of a sultry day, when borne on the evening breeze, it tells you, you may now throw open your doors and windows without fear of a scorching blast.

Allusions to natural objects are also better understood here, than in our northern climate. The necessity of finding a "shadow from the heat," "the shadow of a great rock in a weary land,"* is better known where the effects of a *coup de soleil* are often felt through life; and the value of the promise, the "moon shall not smite thee by night,"† is more fully appreciated in a country, where it is dangerous to sleep in the open air, in the light of the moon, and where some say that meat exposed to its beams, quickly becomes putrid.

The number of servants will at first surprise you, for partly on account of caste, and partly from other causes, there are two or three times as many required here as in England. Not more than one

* Isaiah xxv. 4; xxxii. 2.

† Psalm cxxi. 6.

or two sleep in the house—the ayah often does, some of the men-servants also take it in rotation ; and he whose turn it is, rolls himself up in his long white cloth, lays himself down in the verandah, and sleeps as soundly as if he were in a comfortable bed. Many of them live in the “Compound,”* sometimes to the number of twenty or thirty families, forming quite a little village ; and when the master and mistress are anxious for their welfare, they often give the children the advantage of a school of their own.

An Indian life presents, in many ways, a curious mixture of European and Oriental scenes, and it will at first seem very strange to find yourself in an English carriage, with English friends, and to see around you the palanquins—the bullock bandies—the native hackeries drawn by oxen, and adorned with jingling bells ; and now and then to meet an elephant, with his unwieldy form, and slow and heavy tread.

The smaller animals will also draw your attention. If you are in a garden house, the numerous parrots will be seen brightening the trees with their gay and varied plumage ; or if in Black Town, you should be tempted to an early morning walk, you

* The enclosed piece of ground, whether large or small, that surrounds the house, and within which are the offices, garden, &c.

will be amused, or perhaps disgusted, with the brown baboons, who may be observed in every direction, running along the cornices and parapets of European buildings, or scrambling over the roofs of the native houses ; sometimes running on three legs, while a *baby monkey* is grasped in the remaining paw. But whether in the garden houses, or in Black Town, you will have constant visitors in the pretty little grey squirrels, with their bushy tails, who, without any fear or shyness, run up and down the blinds, or the pillars of the verandah, and will seize the first favourable opportunity to steal into the room, and take possession of any pieces of cake or biscuit they can find ; while the crows will, with as little ceremony, hop in, and help themselves to a piece of butter, or perhaps even carry off a silver spoon before your eyes.

But it would take me too long, were I to attempt an enumeration of the various new and interesting objects that will everywhere meet your eye, and I will, therefore, now only add that I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER III.



VAISHNAVA BRAMIN.

MY DEAR LUCY,
THE religious history of the Hindoos is a remarkable fulfilment of that declaration of Scripture, that

when men do "not like to retain God in their knowledge," He gives "them over to a reprobate mind."

The annals of every nation, except the chosen people of God, are for many ages after the flood so enveloped in obscurity, that in general we can only take it for granted that the declension was gradual; and that each succeeding generation departed farther and farther from the truth, till the religion of Noah and Shem had been changed into the most degrading idolatry.

Among the Hindoos, however, the preservation of their sacred books, enables us to trace the steps of this downward progress with greater accuracy than in the case of any other nation; for, except the hieroglyphics of Egypt, they are the most ancient human records that have been brought to light.

The "Vedas" must have been compiled at least 1400 years before Christ—that is, in the time of the Judges; and about 500 years after, or near the time of Jehoshaphat, a code of laws was drawn up, bearing the name of "Menu." Both of these give much insight into the state of religion and polity in those distant ages; and though the doctrine in the code of Menu is less pure than that of the Vedas, yet in both, we may find proofs that the knowledge of God was not then quite extinct. There is in both of them a distinct acknowledg-

ment of one Supreme Being, the Creator of heaven and earth ; while the use of images is discouraged, and the form of worship seems to have been patriarchal—the head of each family officiating as its priest.

But in other respects, it had not only become degenerate, but showed that it carried in itself the seeds of still deeper apostasy—many inferior deities are mentioned, to whom a lower kind of worship was to be paid ; and the Bramins were unduly and almost incredibly exalted : they were considered superior even to the king, and were forbidden, under pain of future punishment, to hold any intercourse with a Soodra,* or even to teach him the law, or instruct him in the mode of expiating his sins !

The sin of Cain, in offering up “the fruits of the ground” as his only sacrifice, seems in great measure also to have been adopted by them ; for except the great, but rare, horse-sacrifice (*Aswaméthe*), at the consecration of some of their deities, I cannot find any offering enjoined, but those of clarified butter, and the juice of the moon-plant. How remarkable is this proneness to error, on one side or the other ; either offering up to the true God some fond invention of our own, or making the appointed sacrifices to some false deity.

* See Letter v., p. 36.

Gradually the religion of the Hindoos became more and more degenerate; it proceeded from the worship of the elements, the stars and the planets, to the adoration of deified heroes, till it has ended in the present entangled mass of idolatry and falsehood.*

The principal Hindoo deities are Brahmá, Víshnoo, and Síva, with their wives, but the first of these is little cared for, and there is only one temple to his honour throughout the whole of India. Síva, Víshnoo, and the Sáktis (or female deities), are worshipped by the bulk of the people; and their votaries, who are respectively called Saívas, Vaishnavas, or Sáktas, are distinguished by the different marks upon their foreheads, breasts, and arms, made with a whitish powder, composed of dried cow-dung, raspings of sandal-wood, and saffron, which are renewed every morning before they taste food.

The accounts which the Hindoos themselves give of these different sects are very contradictory; according to some, it is free to every individual to join whichever he pleases, or, if he prefers it, to keep separate from all; but there seems reason to think, that whatever might have been the case originally, yet that the distinctions have now become

* Some of their philosophers are said to believe in one Supreme Being; but this is only the Pantheistic notion that all things are *actually* God.

hereditary. One thing however seems clear, that the being the peculiar votary of *one*, does not prevent a general worship from being paid to all the others.

The images of Sîva represent him as a frightful being, sometimes with several heads, sometimes with only one: he has three eyes, the middle one of fire, and the number of his hands varies from four to thirty-two. He is generally sitting on the skin of a tiger, adorned with human skulls, his hair matted and dishevelled, and holding a trident in his hand. He accepts the sacrifice of animals, and is propitiated by the self-inflicted tortures of his votaries.

In some respects, the worship of Sîva resembles that of the Egyptian Osiris; the bull also is sacred to him, and is a distinguishing ornament of his temples—figures of it being placed at the corners, and sometimes along the top of the outer walls, as well as in different parts of the interior. The famous black bull of Tanjore is probably consecrated to him.

Frightful, however, as Sîva is, he is exceeded by his terrific wife. She appears in various characters, and under various names; but whether as Kâli, Bhawâni, Doûrga, or Parvâti, she is (except in one form, when she reminds one of Diana*) horrible

* Near Cape Comorin, she is worshipped as Cumâri (or Virgin,) and the Cape itself derives its name from her in this character, as Calcutta does from that of Kâli (Kâli-ghaut).

beyond description. Streaming with blood, encircled with snakes, and hung round with human heads and skulls, we might well wonder how she could ever be an object of adoration, did we not know how easy it is for men to "become vain in their imaginations," and for "their foolish heart" to be "darkened."

The whole of the religion of these poor people is one of bondage and fear; they know nothing of Him whose name is "love," nor of the "glorious liberty of the sons of God;" and all their offerings and services are to appease the wrath and avert the judgments of these fierce and cruel beings, or at best to fulfil some vow, or procure some temporal blessing. We need not, then, be surprised at the human sacrifices, once openly, and still, it is to be feared, secretly offered to Kâli, near Calcutta, nor at the dreadful scenes among the Khonds in Goomsoor.*

* The "South India Christian Repository," for January, 1837, contains an account of an annual human sacrifice, among these people, for the purpose of procuring fertility for their land. It is celebrated with much savage pomp and ceremony; but the barbarous cruelties that accompany it are too horrible to repeat here. Not less than twenty intended victims were at that time rescued by our troops, and the dreadful sacrifices ceased for a while. They were afterwards resumed, but one of the latest mails from India mentions, that the Government has ordered a military force to proceed to the hills, to put a final stop to them.

Vishnoo, though equally wicked, is not so frightful and disgusting as Siva and Kâli. He is generally worshipped under one of his many supposed incarnations; and a very popular form is that of Râm or Râma, a prince of Oude, who is said, with the assistance of an army of bears and monkeys, to have conquered Ceylon, and a great part of southern India.

The name "Râm," twice repeated, is, in most parts of India, the usual form of saluting each other, among all classes, except the Bramins; and many of the names both of persons and places are derived from it.* The people are never tired of hearing of his military exploits; and if you lived in Black Town, you would most likely see an instance of the delight it gives them, whenever you returned home from an evening visit at Vepery.

Near the Elephant Gate, often as late as ten or eleven o'clock, a man is almost always to be seen, sitting on the piol† of a native house, his little lamp in a niche in the wall behind him; and, with a large well-worn olei book in his hand, reading or rather chanting passages from the Ramáyuna, an heroic poem, in praise of Râm; while a party of natives are sitting on the ground, listening in motionless attention to the oft-heard tale.

* Such as Ramnad, Ramiah, &c., &c.

† Letter vi., p. 48.

But the most popular incarnation of Vishnoo, is that of Krishna, and under this name he appears in a variety of characters, but generally as a young man with handsome features, and of an azure colour, and sometimes as a playful child. His name, like that of Râm, may be also traced in those of many towns and districts, as well as persons.*

Inferior to these, but still considered as superior deities, are "Surya," or the sun, (in his one-wheeled chariot drawn by seven green coursers, and with "Aroun"† as his driver,)—"Hunnamân," the monkey god, whose picture is often painted on the outer wall of the houses,—and several others.

But the most honoured among these is Gânesa, the god of wisdom, whose ill-shapen human figure, with its elephant head, is oftener to be seen than any other.

If a new house is to be built, the spot must first be consecrated with cow-dung and ashes, and a figure of Gânesa is then erected, which remains till the building is completed. His image often marks the boundary of landed property, and he is to be seen at the upper end of the native schools, presiding over the instruction, and ready to receive the offerings of rice and flowers duly paid by every

* Such as Krishnagur—Kistnapatam, &c., &c.

† Is this the Aurora of the Greeks?

boy when first admitted to the school, or advanced to a higher class.

And though the salutation, "Hail Gánesa," with which almost every native book is headed, (like the "Allah," which the Mohammedans invariably prefix to the most trifling note,) be vain and impious; yet it may well make us reflect how far in all our common actions *we* seek for wisdom where alone it is to be found.

But in addition to all these gods, who are more or less worshipped by the whole community, every village has two or three local divinities of its own; and though the Hindoo statements are doubtless much exaggerated,* yet they give us some idea of the multitude there must really be.

Idol temples are to be seen in every direction—they are numerous in all the towns, and even the villages, not unfrequently, have two or three in them. They vary greatly in size and importance; sometimes it is only a little shrine just large enough to hold the tutelar deity of the place, while sometimes you are astonished at the splendid pagoda dedicated to Siva or to Vishnoo, with its lofty goprums, its spacious tanks, and its extensive courts.

Every river too, is supposed to be the residence of a god, and even in the deepest recesses of the

* Some state the number at 330,000,000.

forest, you may chance to find a stone covered with vermillion, and with a garland hung on the tree above it, marking out some consecrated spot.*

The *devotees* among the Hindoos, are very numerous, and differ widely in their habits. They belong to regular orders, like the monastic orders in the Romish Church, some living in convents richly endowed, and others wandering about the country, and living on the bounty of others. It is remarkable, that no distinction of caste is allowed in these societies; and even the Bramin must break the sacred cord that has from youth distinguished him, and freely mix with the rest of the fraternity.

It would neither be profitable nor interesting to you, were I to enter into any lengthened account of these unhappy people, of whom, though a few are doubtless sincere in their profession, yet by far the greater number are evidently impostors, who hope to profit by the astonishment or pity of others. They are called, according to their orders, by various names Gosâyens, Yogeas, Sanyasses, &c., &c., but must not be confounded with the *Fakirs*, for these last, though very much resembling the others, are Mohammedans, not heathens.

Some of these devotees, particularly the worshippers of Sîva, will torture themselves in a variety of ways. Some will hold their arm in one position

* "Every green tree," &c. Isaiah lvii. 5.

till it becomes immoveably fixed, or keep their fist closed till the nails are grown through to the back of the hand. Others will stand with their eyes fixed on the sun till they are blind, while some will undertake to expiate their own sins, or those of others, by swinging round a high pole to which they are fastened by iron hooks inserted in their backs.

Some hope, or profess to hope, to obtain future happiness, by abstracting their thoughts from all earthly things, and in some cases, would perish with hunger, did not their friends and neighbours take care to feed them ; while others, of a very different turn of mind, and votaries of Vishnoo, declare that it is their indispensable duty to live as luxuriously, and dress as richly, as possible, and to indulge in every kind of gaiety and pleasure—and, strange to say, these last have as many admirers as the rest, who ungrudgingly supply them with ample means of supporting their excesses !

Except one class who consider it meritorious to go about the country without any clothing, with their hair matted, and in the most dirty and disgusting state, all these devotees may be known by a turban or scarf of a tawny orange colour, and by their readiness to receive money from any who will offer it to them, and the Sanyasses may be still further distinguished by a long necklace of large beads furrowed like a peach stone.

This long letter presents a melancholy picture of the power of Satan over these poor people ; but some acquaintance with their religious state seems necessary before we can, in any adequate degree, feel either our own privileges or the importance of using every means within our reach of rescuing them from their fearful thralldom. I shall, however, now conclude with assuring you that I remain,

Yours affectionately,
S. T.

LETTER IV.

ALAS! my dear Lucy, for these deluded people, whose very religion degrades their minds, and cherishes, instead of subduing, the natural evil of their hearts!

There is not a crime committed among men, of which they have not an example and a sanction, in one or other of their gods. Brahmá, for instance, is continually quarrelling with his brothers, and in one of their disputes has his head cut off by Síva; the only drink of the horrible Káli is the blood of men or beasts, and her chief delight is in the torment of mankind; while even the favourite Krishna, besides his profligacy and other vices, is often represented as an ingenious thief.

In Tinnevelly, he is more frequently worshipped in this character than in any other; and an idol, not an inch high, was lately sent by Anna, the daughter of the Rev. John Dewasagayam, to a friend in England, which represents him as dancing in triumph, with a pat of butter in his hand, that he had just stolen from a neighbouring dairy!

How can a people who thus bow down to wickedness be otherwise than sunk in immorality? and who can estimate aright the blessing of Christianity, if considered only as insensibly raising the tone of morals, even where its essential doctrines do not touch the heart.

Sunk, however, as the Hindoos are in spiritual and mental darkness, there is much in their natural dispositions that is engaging and attractive, and, were the Spirit poured out upon them from on high, their character would be one of peculiar loveliness.

In their case, the corruption of the heart shews itself chiefly in deceit and falsehood; and the cruelty with which they are often charged, seems to be rather an indifference to the sufferings of others, than any actual pleasure in them. And, though their public and private histories are stained with many an act of violence, yet, even these appear very much to be the result of some other principle, which preponderates over their feelings of humanity;* while the numerous choultries, tanks, &c., built by individuals in fulfilment of some religious vow, afford a proof, that with their superstitions, there is also mingled a sentiment of benevolence, and a desire for the comfort and welfare of others.

Their manner is mild and gentle, their disposition

* See Letter v., p. 42.

is affectionate, and those who are in the service of Europeans, become, when kindly treated, strongly attached to their master or mistress. In times of sickness or sorrow, they will watch over them with the most tender and unwearying care, and if a child is ill, its ayah will devote herself to it night and day. Seating herself on the ground, and laying her little charge, in the eastern manner, between her knees, she will rock herself to and fro for hours ; and will often be so taken up with her endeavours to soothe and comfort it, as almost to forget that she herself requires food or rest.

This character applies to the *Tamul* people, as those are called who inhabit the country east of the Ghauts, from Pulicat on the north, to Cape Comorin, in the south ; but is more especially true of the *Teloogoo* people, whose country lies to the north of Madras, and stretching from Pulicat to Ganjam on the coast, reaches inland as far as Hyderabad, Bellary, &c. They are also scattered throughout the Tamul country, several villages are inhabited by them, and some of the household servants, and almost all the bearers of palanquins, are Teloogoo men—their language is different from the Tamul, and they appear to be a distinct people.

They are more firmly and strongly made than their neighbours, both in body and mind, and while equally affectionate, are more manly, open, and trust-

worthy. But I think a little incident that occurred at the Mission House will give you a better insight into their character than any description can do.

One of the servants there is an old Teloogoo man, of the name of Gooroo pah ; he has lived there for many years, and is entrusted with the general charge of the premises. The clergyman whom he formerly served died about ten years since, and his widow and children returned to England. Two or three years ago, one of the sons, who was in a merchant ship, arrived at Madras, and was invited to spend the day and sleep at his former home. As soon as Gooroo pah heard that the child of his former master was under the same roof with himself, he, without ceremony, made his way up into the sitting room where the family were at dinner, and, with the most touching look of tenderness and feeling, came up to the young man, stood over him, stroking him, and using every expression of affection and attachment he could think of. After a while he went away, but again and again, during that evening and the following morning, did he steal into the room to look at him, and pour forth the feelings of his heart.

The vessel was to proceed in a few days ; but the old man could not let the object of his love leave the shores, perhaps for ever, without attempting to get one more sight of him.

Accordingly, one morning very early, he went on board intending to return immediately; but unfortunately the captain had fixed on that day to make a trip along the coast, and before he had an opportunity of getting away, the anchor was weighed, the ship set sail, and Goorooopah was carried along without the possibility of getting on shore till evening. It was late at night when he got home, and as he had gone away in the morning before the accustomed hour of eating, and would have broken caste had he received rice or water from any but his own class, the poor old man had passed the whole day without a mouthful of food or a drop of water. "But I did not care," was his remark, "for I saw my young master."

For two years, during which his master was alone at the Mission House, every morning did he find a nosegay of flowers placed for him on his breakfast-table by Goorooopah; and afterwards, when he was for some weeks absent from Madras, the day never passed without this faithful old man coming up stairs to ask tidings of him from his mistress.

Most painful and most striking is the proof this poor man gives of the enmity of the natural heart against God. Gentle and amiable as he is, faithful and affectionate to his master, and full of kindness to all around, yet when the subject of religion is

brought before him, however tenderly and affectionately, a darker shade passes over his expressive features, his countenance becomes gloomy, and he turns away with an almost haughty air.

In former days, when Mr. Rhenius or Mr. Ridsdale spoke to him, he used to say he could not understand such things ;—now his excuse is, he is too old to change !

Melancholy, indeed, is it to receive his pleasant salaam and smile, and the fragrant jasmine blossoms he so often brings, and yet to know that, as yet, he is “without God in the world.” Oh, that the Holy Spirit may even now, at the eleventh hour, descend upon him, and teach him to know “the only true God, and JESUS CHRIST whom He hath sent !” And may we be led to bear these people more and more upon our hearts before the throne of grace.

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER V.

You ask me, my dear Lucy, to explain to you the difference of "Castes" in India, and I will try to do so ; but the whole subject is so complicated and puzzling, that I shall not attempt to give you any of the minuter details.

You must not suppose that it is there as in England, where, though difference of rank naturally produces a difference in the forms of society, it does not at all hinder the interchange of kindness and mutual good offices. The distinction of "caste" is a *religious* distinction, and any one who breaks through it becomes ceremonially polluted ; it has been handed down from generation to generation, and the hold it has on the native mind is so powerful, that those among us who know not the power of the Gospel will often speak of it as a bond which *can never* be destroyed.

The principal castes in South India are the Bramins and the Soodras, both of which are almost endlessly sub-divided. There are, however, a large number of *mixed* classes and Pariars, who, though they have in reality no caste at all, have as many

distinctions among themselves as the others, and are even more tenacious of them—these are sometimes called *low caste* people.

Difference of caste is not affected by the possession or the want of property ; a Pariar may be very rich, and a Bramin in the most abject poverty ; and there have even been instances of princes whose cooks would have degraded themselves had they sat down to table with their sovereign ! Generally speaking, however, the influential situations under Government are filled by Bramins, while the merchants and artizans are Soodras ; but there are occasionally exceptions to this rule, and under certain circumstances, a Bramin may enter into trade.*

The barrier between the castes is impassable, and you may, therefore, suppose how much this system must interfere with any improvement in their social condition. No talents, industry, or success can ever raise a man above the station in which he was born ; a Pariar can never become a Soodra, nor a Soodra be raised to a Bramin, and this extends even to all the sub-divisions, so that whether agreeable or disagreeable, the young men must (with a very few exceptions) follow the occupation of their fathers—the sons of a merchant must be merchants—those of a carpenter must still be carpenters—and even

* The makers and sellers of sweetmeats are almost always Bramins.

the children of the washerman must continue their father's employment or must starve.

Oh! how would the mind and spirit of our English youth resist this arbitrary system, and how thankful may they be to be exempt from so unnatural a restraint on the freedom of thought and action, and the exercise of those energies with which God has blessed them!

There is also no gradual descending in native society—if a man loses caste he does not descend into the next below him, but is excluded from every caste, and must forego all the intercourse of domestic life, as well as all the privileges of a citizen—no longer can he be admitted to his father's house, and his nearest relations must have no communication with him.

The different castes never intermarry, nor would those far removed from each other even think of entering the other's dwelling. In Tinnevely, if any of the Shanars, who are the next below the Soodras, have a complaint to bring before the Tahsildar (or native magistrate), they either stand on the outside of the verandah, while he receives their evidence from the window, or he adjourns to a neighbouring shed, which they may all enter without contamination.

The different castes will not eat in the sight of each other, nor touch each other's persons or

clothes, nor will they take food, or touch a plate or drinking vessel that has passed through the hands of an inferior ; and yet (with what would to us seem a strange inconsistency) they have no scruple in preparing food for any one, even for "defiled Christians," so that a Bramin may be cook to a Pariar, though the Pariar cannot be to the Bramin. It was on this account that some missionaries used to employ a high caste cook in those schools where boys were boarded ; though sometimes even this was not sufficient, and Mr. Rhenius, soon after he went to Palamcottah, was obliged to break up for a time a seminary he had just formed, because some of the boys would not eat in the same room with the rest.

This adherence to caste will remain unshaken by the prospect of private or public danger ; for not long ago, when a fire broke out in Black Town, which threatened the safety of a large part of the town, the Bramins obstinately persisted in refusing to open the only well that was near the spot, and which happened to belong to them.

Nor is the power of caste subdued by personal suffering, not even by those dreadful visitations of famine well known in India, but which, thank God, are without a parallel in Europe, when the heart is sickened at the sight of the dying and the dead by the side of some public road, and which the utmost

efforts of Europeans can only avail to mitigate, but not remove.

It was during one of these fearful scourges which had swept away nearly half the population of Guntoor, that a lady, travelling through that province, was appealed to for food by a poor miserable creature, almost perishing from hunger—the only food the lady had in her palanquin was a small piece of bread, which she handed to her, thankful to be able to supply her with even this trifling relief. The sufferings of the poor woman induced her to take the bread, but before she would put it to her mouth, she carefully broke off and threw away every part that had been touched by the fingers of her who was thus rescuing her from starvation !

The Water Pandals are a remarkable instance of contending feelings—compassion for the wants of others, mixed with strict adherence to caste. They may often be seen in cross roads, or in the less frequented streets of a town, and are simply bamboo sheds which have been erected by some wealthy native as a meritorious act, or to fulfil some vow, or expiate some sin. Here the thirsty traveller, be he who he may, can be refreshed with water or with butter-milk ; but the person who serves it out must be a Bramin, as he alone is privileged to give to all.

If a fellow Bramin applies for refreshment the

vessel is given to him, and he drinks as usual ; but a Soodra or a Pariar must submit to have the water poured down his throat, or into his hands, so placed as to make a channel to his mouth. In some cases the refreshment is conveyed to the low caste people by means of a split bamboo passed through the side of the pandal ; and thus the Bramin is more effectually protected from the danger of defilement.



The difficulties and perplexities to which caste gives rise are endless. In one case, some persons went to law against their neighbours (both parties

being Pariars) because they had infringed on their privileges, by pouring out *three* chatties of water instead of *two* at a funeral ! In another, a Bramin, who was a native judge near Conjeveram, and to whose turn it came to be removed to a distant province, came with tears to the English authorities to beg he might remain where he was, as otherwise he should have no one to cook for him, or in case of his death, to bury him. It seems that his division of the caste was very small, consisting only of about twelve families, and they were all living near Conjeveram. As no alteration could be made, he was advised to remedy the evil by removing some of the other families with him, and as his salary would be a very large one, to maintain them there at his own expense, and to this plan he joyfully acceded !

But all these temporal inconveniences are as nothing, when compared with the formidable obstacles which caste presents to the influence of Christianity on the heart and life ; hindering, as it does, the exercise of humility and love, and producing a selfish indifference towards those of another class.

Some little time ago a poor Pariar woman was travelling through a part of Tanjore, with which she was unacquainted ; and, weary and very thirsty, came to a miserable looking hut, which, from its appearance, and from the things about it, she sup-

posed belonged to some of her own people. There was no one at home, but not doubting that she was right, she drank a little water from a chatty that was standing outside, and passed on.

Little did the poor woman foresee the consequence of this trifling action, for the hut belonged to a Pulli family, who, though among the lowest of the castes, are a little above the Pariars.

They were in a paddy-field close by, and having seen her take the water, came up immediately, and finding she was only a Pariar woman, were so indignant at her having thus polluted the chatty, that they seized her, dragged her about, and so ill-treated her, that she died soon after from the injuries she received.

The earlier Missionaries do not appear to have been fully aware of the evil influence of caste, and did not therefore set their faces firmly against it, and it is doubtless from this cause that the great body of the early converts in South India adhered so closely to it. Indeed the system is so wrought into their minds, having been from their earliest infancy combined with every action and relation of social life, that even among the more enlightened, there is scarcely one who is sufficiently free from its thralldom, to take water from a Pariar. To this day, when the Lord's Supper is administered, the Missionary is not unfrequently obliged to watch

lest the catechist should contrive so to arrange the communicants as to keep back the low caste people till the others have received it.

The first decided act of breaking caste, is an important step in the life of a native Christian, and the Rev. T. Barenbruck, writing from Mayaveram some years ago, gives the following account of it, in the case of the Rev. John Dewasagayam, who was then one of his catechists :—" John Dewasagayam came to my room, and told me, that as I had frequently wished that he would come forward to profess openly that he was not a supporter of the heathenish notion of ' caste,' he had invited a country catechist, and one of our readers, both of low caste, to dine with him at his room : I was glad to hear this ; and proposed to him to ask some of the Soodra Christians at the same time. At his desire, Mr. Schaffter and I went to his apartment, where we found several Christians and the elder seminarists assembled. After having introduced the subject, John plainly and distinctly stated, that having considered caste for some time, and compared it with the Scriptures, he found it was against Scripture, and should not, therefore, countenance it any longer : and as a proof of this, he had invited two persons of low caste, but holding offices in the church, and should be glad if all would stay with him, and partake, in

brotherly love, of his meal. Cornelius, who since his baptism, has renounced caste, stayed to dine with him, but all the others refused, and returned home."

The feeling with regard to caste, is as powerful in the young as among the older people. One day at the Mission-house, allusion was made to the subject in the presence of a very nice native Christian youth; he looked very grave, and upon its being said to him, "You would not drink water with me, would you?" the grave expression in his countenance changed to one of deep distress; his eyes glistened, the tears rolled down his cheeks, nor could he recover himself during the remainder of the visit. Savarimuttoo (for that was his name) was then in the grammar-school, where his education was paid for by the kindness of friends in England; since that time he has been taken, as we hope and believe, to that land where earthly distinctions are no longer known, but Christ is fully seen and acknowledged to be all in all. About two years ago, he was attacked by cholera at seven o'clock in the morning, and was gone by eleven at night! He sent a message by his uncle Dewasoodamony, a catechist, to Mr. Tucker, and to his instructors at the grammar-school, to tell them that "he was falling asleep in Jesus, with faith and pardon for His sins by him."

It had been the hope of his friends, that Savarimuttoo would hereafter have become a faithful messenger of salvation among his heathen countrymen; not only, however, did it please God to try the faith and patience of His saints, by taking him away, but almost at the same time their hopes were disappointed in another quarter by the death of another very promising native youth who was also at the grammar-school.

My dear Lucy, how is "Cease ye from man," written on all that we undertake.

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR LUCY,

I SHALL now proceed to give you a little account of Madras itself, and will first mention the Fort, which as I before told you, stands upon the sea-shore: it is a large well-fortified building, and has within its walls a church and the government offices; but there is nothing about it particularly interesting or picturesque.

To the north of the Fort lies Black Town, and on the south are St. Thomé and Triplicane, the latter inhabited by thousands of Mohammedans; and the Nawaub of the Carnatic has also his palace there.

There are several native villages lying near Madras; and the neighbourhood for five or six miles around is interspersed with "garden houses," as they are called, the residences of Europeans.

Black Town alone contains, according to some accounts, 400,000 souls; while others say, that there are not less than 600,000. These are chiefly natives, but there are also a considerable number of East Indians and some Europeans.

The houses of the natives are built of mud, and

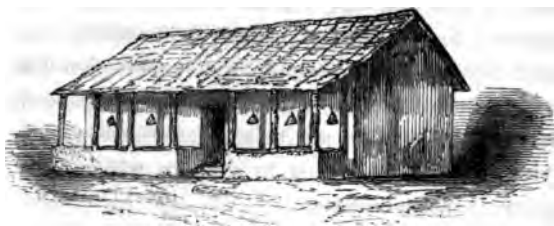
the want of windows towards the street gives them a gloomy appearance. Those of the middling classes consist of four or five rooms, opening into a little quadrangle in the middle. The roof is tiled, and projects considerably beyond the walls; in the interior, the four sloping sides so nearly meet, as to leave a very small space uncovered, while towards the street the projecting roof forms a kind of open shed, called a "piol," having a bank of earth running along the wall, intended for a seat.

The rooms are small and low, open to the roof, and their bare and white-washed walls have no other ornaments than a few rude triangular niches for their little brass or earthen lamps.



The doors are about the height of a man's shoulder, and the windows, which all look into the covered passage made by the interior roofs, are not more than two feet square. The entrance to the house is by a low door into a passage nearly as low,

but wide enough to have seats of earth on both sides, like those of the piol. It is here that the master of the house receives his guests, "speaking in the gate."



The better kind are two storied,—the outer walls are sometimes ornamented with rude paintings, particularly of Hûnnamân, the monkey god ; and, as well as those of the middling class, have several triangular niches, larger than those in the rooms, in which lighted lamps are placed during their processions.

The lower classes live in miserable huts, the mud walls not more than two or three feet high, and the roof (thatched with palmyra leaves, which are tied on with ropes) reaching nearly to the ground. The door-way, for doors they have none, is at the end, and so low that it is not easy to stoop low enough to enter. When these poor people move to another spot, they merely take the roof to pieces, and carrying it with them to serve for their new abode, leave

the walls to be washed away by the next monsoon rains.

You will suppose that the closeness of even the best of these native houses must be almost insufferable in that climate; nor do I know what their reason is for thus excluding both light and air; but heat does not affect them in the same degree that it does us—the hands of a native are always cool, and you may often see those of the lower class lying down and sleeping in the sun, without any apparent inconvenience.

The houses of the poorer classes of *East Indians* differ but little from the native ones; but those of a better kind are more like European dwellings.

The noise and closeness of the streets of Black Town prevent it from being the residence of Europeans; and, indeed, till lately, the Missionary of the Church Missionary Society was the only Protestant clergyman residing amidst this vast population. Even now, though besides the Secretary of the Corresponding Committee, who lives at the Mission-house, there are the two Masters at Bishop Corrie's Grammar-school, and three Missionaries at the Scotch Free Church school, these have such full employment in their own immediate work, that they are able to do very little for the hundreds of thousands around them.

It painfully affects the mind when first going to

live in Black Town to see yourself surrounded by idolaters—the very servants are mostly heathen, though a few of them are Christians or Mohammedans ; and, look where you will, you see God dishonoured on every side. The people you meet bear on their foreheads and arms the mark of their god ; and either the white horizontal stripe of Siva, or the wafer-like spot to represent his fiery eye, or Vishnoo's red and yellow trident, appears on almost every face.

Not, alas ! like the cross traced on the forehead of the Christian infant, “in token that hereafter he shall not be ashamed to confess the faith of Christ crucified ;” these only show that the poor Hindoo who bears them is still the slave of Satan, and has either never heard of Jesus, or, if he has, that he loves darkness rather than light.

The multitude of processions also bring the melancholy condition of these people continually before you with a painful reality. Once a year, in the month Mohurram, the *Mohammedans* (who in India are of the Schiite sect) have a grand ceremony to commemorate the death of Hossein, the son of Ali. It lasts ten days, and during the whole time no work is done, but processions are going about the streets night and day, carrying various figures, particularly that of a hand, in memory of Hossein's nephew, and attended by crowds of people

with discordant music. Stages are erected at different places, where the touching and heroic scenes of the Kerbela are recited and sometimes acted ; and the whole of the Mohammedan population is in a state of feverish excitement.

But I can give you no idea of the number or variety of the *Hindoo* processions ; they are constantly going on at all times of the year, and vary according to the god in whose honour they are performed, but generally take place in the evening or at night.

At one time you may see a large frightful image carried under a canopy, and the attendants fanning it as it moves on ; at another, an idol riding on the figure of an immense peacock will be borne along, preceded perhaps by an elephant or a camel ; but all are accompanied by tom-toms (a rude kind of drum) and followed by crowds of people. A number of torches are always carried, burning with a yellow glare, except when from saltpetre thrown upon them, they from time to time burst out with a blaze of blue light, and throw a ghastly colouring on all around, till a dense cloud of smoke arises, and for a while all is in darkness.

One of the most popular processions is an annual one in honour of Siva ; when the idol is placed on a car, very like the car of Juggernaut, and the huge machine is dragged up and down the street,

with torches and tom-toms, while the people chant or shout in chorus. The preparations for this occupy some weeks, the car is moved from its usual abode, (a building in the court of a pagoda,) painted, and decorated with flags. Canopies with flags and lamps are erected in the street, and festoons of flowers and leaves are hung across from side to side. The procession itself is attended by throngs of people ; the greatest excitement prevails among them, and the whole is a fearful, but yet imposing scene.

But the harsh sounds of the tom-toms are not confined to occasions of peculiar ceremony, they may be continually heard at different times of the day ; and frequently the service in the Mission chapel can scarcely be attended to from the noise they make.

The pagodas (as the larger idol temples are called by Europeans) are generally enclosed by high walls, and have a tank attached to them, the sides of which are often broad flights of steps leading down to the water.

One of these temples stands opposite some of the windows of the Mission-house, and as it is only at a little distance, it often affords an opportunity of seeing and hearing what is going on. One day, a lady, who was there, had heard through the whole day a great noise of tom-toms and shouting ; but

this occurs so frequently, that it did not particularly attract her attention till, towards evening, the noise became worse even than usual, and she thought she heard an explosion. This induced her to go out into the verandah, and as the Mission-house is two stories high, she was able to look over the roofs of the intervening huts, and to see some of the ceremonies. It was nearly seven o'clock, and as, you know, the sun in that latitude always sets about six, and the twilight is very short, it was beginning to get dark.

On looking towards the pagoda, she saw crowds of people, men, women, and children, their heads one above another, standing on the steps of the tank ; some were beating tom-toms, others waving lighted torches, all shouting, and evidently taking the greatest interest in the scene.

The glare of the torches threw at times so bright a light upon the various groups, that she could plainly distinguish them, and then everything for a while would be enveloped in smoke, except the upper part of the tower of the pagoda, and the beautiful cocoa-nut tree that is near the tank. At intervals rockets were fired off, and altogether the noise and clamour were more than you can well imagine.

And what was all this for ? It was their annual ceremony of taking their senseless idol out of its



THE CHURCH MISSION CHAPEL AT MADRAS.

shrine and putting it on a raft, where, surrounded by priests and dancing girls, it was to be dragged round the tank, and then carried back to its dark recess !

The stars were shining brightly, and the feathery branches of the cocoa-nut tree were waving gently to the evening breeze, and as the lady thought of the nineteenth Psalm, it saddened her heart to reflect, that while "the spangled heavens" were proclaiming their "great Original," these poor people, with immortal souls like her own, were thus insulting His high and holy name. But "how can they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher?"* and she longed for more Missionaries to be sent out to proclaim the glad tidings of salvation.

Just then, she heard the sound of the bell from the little Mission chapel at the end of the garden, and turning round, saw it lighted up, and remembered that it was Wednesday evening, when there is always Divine service in Tamul for the converted natives. Her spirit was comforted and encouraged as she watched a few quietly going in one by one, and presently the voice of singing burst upon her ear,—the service was beginning, and prayer and praise to JEHOVAH arose from lips, which, had no

* Romans x. 14.

· Missionary ever visited Southern India, would have been shouting in the temple of the idol.

It is true, that as yet there are but few real converts from among the heathen, compared with the millions who still remain in their idolatry ; and it sometimes seems so like gathering up a few grains of sand from the sea shore, that we may even be tempted to think that a great deal of money, and time, and strength, and life has been expended, and all but to little purpose. But if we remember the value of one soul, that it is infinitely more precious than the whole world—we shall think that all has been well spent, and shall thank God for every instance in which He has blessed the work of our Missionaries.

Besides, did we see less fruit even than we do, the command of God is plain and certain, “Preach the Gospel to every creature,” and the promise is as plain and as sure, “Lo ! I am with you alway, even to the end of the world.”

Let us, then, my dear Lucy, endeavour to realize the promise, that so the command may be to us as much a privilege as a duty.

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER VII.

Do you not sometimes, my dear Lucy, when you have taken up a Missionary paper, and glanced at its contents, lay it down again with a feeling of disappointment, because there does not happen to be in it anything new or particularly interesting? I own I have often done so, but I must own also that the fault has been more in myself than in the paper, and has arisen from want of a distinct knowledge of the separate Missions.

For instance, we read, perhaps, that “the Rev. ——— and Mrs. ——— have been obliged to return to England,” &c., &c., but unless we are personally acquainted with them or their work, we only feel a passing regret that any servant of God should be laid aside, and the circumstance probably does not recur to us a second time.

But very different will be our feelings if we have in any degree traced the progress of that particular Mission, and know somewhat of its difficulties and its present state.

The number of catechists now left without a

guide—the schools without efficient superintendence—the promising girls' school broken up, and the children sent back to their miserable homes—the congregation now deprived of the appointed means of grace—and the heathen inquirers stopped in their search after truth—all these will come before the mind with a forcible reality, and call forth our lively sympathy and our earnest prayers.

Nowhere are the Missions subject to these reverses so frequently as in India, where the climate often occasions such sudden removals, and where the fewness of the labourers, and the distance of one station from another, prevents the deserted Mission from obtaining any effectual assistance from without. It is always *months*, and sometimes, as at Madras and Mayaveram, it has been several *years*, before the loss of a Missionary can be supplied; and what wonder then is it, if the schools languish, the Christians grow lukewarm, and the heathen become indifferent? Rather may we adore the grace of God who has not even in such cases left Himself without witnesses, but has preserved a spark of life amidst the many waters that have sought to quench it.

The Mission at Madras has, among others, suffered severely from the removal and want of Missionaries. The death of the Rev. J. Ridsdale in 1831, threw the charge of the East Indians and

the English services at the Mission chapel upon the Rev. C. Blackman, who had already the entire charge of the native part of the Mission, both in Madras itself and the surrounding villages. As might be expected, this additional work was too much for him, and though in 1833, he was joined by the Rev. G. Pettit, his health sunk under the pressure, and he was obliged to go to the Nilgherries.

Mr. Pettit applied himself strenuously to the acquirement of the language, but by the time he had made himself master of it, circumstances arose, which, in 1835, removed him to Tinnevely; and from that time to the present, (except the Rev. H. Harley for a few months), Madras has been without a Missionary. It has been under the care of the native catechists, who though of very great service when under the direction of an European, are not equal to the entire management of a Mission.*

For some time after Mr. Pettit's departure, Mr. Tucker used to attend the early Tamul service in the Mission chapel, on Sunday mornings. Daniel,

* At present (1848) there are four missionaries at Madras, viz., the Rev. J. H. Elouis, the Rev. J. Bilderbeck, the Rev. J. B. Rodgers, and the Rev. Dewasagayam Gnanamuttoo. The three last were born in India; and Mr. Rodgers and Dewasagayam Gnanamuttoo were educated, first in Bishop Corrie's Grammar-school, and then in the Madras Church Missionary Institution.

the catechist, reading the prayers, while he himself pronounced the absolution, and preached in English, while Daniel interpreted. You would have been interested in the sight—the benches used by the English congregation were removed, to leave a clear space in the middle of the chapel, to be occupied by the natives sitting on the floor, or when kneeling, prostrating themselves so low that their foreheads touched the ground; the women keeping their cloths drawn over their heads during the whole service. You would have been surprised too to hear the preacher stop occasionally in his sermon to ask questions, and receive answers from the congregation; but strange as this would seem to us, it is an excellent plan for keeping up their attention, as well as of ascertaining whether they understand what they hear.

This arrangement, however, could not continue very long, for Mr. Tucker had already two full English services on the Sunday; and he was accordingly obliged to withdraw his attendance from the Tamul worship, except when baptism or the Lord's supper was to be administered. It was again left to the catechists, who still conduct it; and the smallness of the congregation, and the occasional irregular behaviour of some among them, show how greatly the Mission needs the constant superintendence of a regular Missionary.*

* See note on preceding page.

Yet, notwithstanding all this, there is much to encourage and quicken us; and a glow of thankfulness and hope is often kindled at the Mission-house, as the sound of native voices, singing some Tamul hymn, gently and clearly rises through the garden at the time of their early morning or their evening worship.

Some of the catechists take great pains in teaching the people the Word of God; and a lady whose heathen ayah regularly attended the service, has told me how often she has been surprised and delighted with the account she would give of what she had heard. With the most earnest look and manner, and eagerly endeavouring to convey in her imperfect English what she had heard in Tamul, she would repeat a history or a parable with as much animation as if she had herself been present at the scene described, nor did she often fail in making a right application of it.

The same lady was much interested at witnessing the baptism of a native young woman. Mr. Tucker performed the service—Daniel interpreting. She was a very interesting looking girl; and it was altogether a singular and impressive sight. The young woman stood at the font, with her reddish cloth over her head, which she just threw back when she was sprinkled, and seemed so serious and earnest, that she might have put to shame some who

have long professed to be Christians. I trust she received the inward and spiritual grace, as well as the outward sign, and that she will prove herself one of Christ's faithful "soldiers and servants unto her life's end." The Epistle for the day was very appropriate, for it happened to be All Saints' Day; and her making the responses in Tamul, well illustrated the passage, "Lo! a great multitude, which no man could number, of all *nations*, and kindreds, and people, and *tongues*," &c.

We are apt, I think, very often to expect too much from native converts, and to be discouraged when we hear of their occasional backslidings, or of their standard of moral principle being still low. But if we look at St. Paul's Epistles to the Corinthians and Galatians, or at the second and third chapters of the book of Revelations, we shall see what grievous errors existed in the early churches, even in the lifetime of the apostles; and yet our Lord did not cast them off, nor did His servants give them up in despair. Our Lord's addresses are full of tenderness, while he rebukes; and the love and zeal of His apostles seemed quickened by their anxiety to bring back the people into the ways of truth and holiness.

Or let us look at the Church in our own country, where we have the blessing of a regular ministry, the Word of God, and uninterrupted means of grace,

from our infancy ; and see how few there are who in any measure live up to their profession.

And shall we then wonder that these poor people, who in their earliest childhood were imbued with all the abominations of heathenism,—were brought up on no higher principle than to do and think "*what master pleases*," and are even now living in an atmosphere so polluted,—should sometimes be entangled in the snares around them, and seldom bring forth as much fruit as we should wish to see?

And yet we must not think too lightly of what the Holy Spirit has been pleased to work among them—He has graciously given some increase even here, where there is neither a Paul to plant, nor an Apollos to water. One instance I will give is that of an assistant catechist, whose death was mentioned in some of the late letters from Madras.

This young man, whose name was Enoch, was the son of native Christians, and his widowed mother is a schoolmistress under the Ladies' Committee for Female Education.* He was educated at the Church Missionary seminary at Perambore, and when Mr. Pettit removed to Palamcottah, Enoch accompanied him, and was employed in the Tinnevely Mission. From this situation he was dismissed, in consequence of some misconduct, and returned to Madras, where, though he showed a

* She is since dead.

spirit of genuine penitence and humility, it was thought right to prove the sincerity of his repentance by placing him for a time in some inferior situation.

He was accordingly employed on a very low salary, as schoolmaster to the children of the native servants at the Mission-house; and the answers the boys gave when questioned at the family worship, plainly showed how much pains he took with them. Having proved himself worthy of a higher trust, he was, after a time, made an assistant catechist under Daniel and Cornelius, and was engaged in visiting schools, distributing tracts, or reading the Scriptures to the people. He entered with his whole heart upon the duties of his new situation, always eagerly embracing any fresh opening for usefulness, and going through his work with great regularity. His gentle and obliging manner won the regard of all who had intercourse with him, and he was never better pleased than when he had found some opportunity of showing attention and gratitude to those who had been kind to him, several times bringing some little present to be sent to friends in England who were, he knew, interested in missionary work.

But it pleased God to take him away in the midst of his usefulness; a few months ago he rapidly sank under a severe attack of a complaint of the lungs, to which he had long been subject; and

though the letters which mention his death give no details of his last hours, yet as they speak of his course of consistent piety and activity enduring to the end, we may confidently believe that he did not receive the grace of God in vain.

Other instances have been from time to time mentioned in the "Madras Church Missionary Records" of those who have gone to their rest in the faith and love of the Gospel, and there are not wanting living witnesses to its power on the heart; but as their warfare is not accomplished, I shall refrain from any particular mention of them.

We may, however, hope for more fruit from the Mission at Madras, as soon as a regular Missionary is settled there, which, I trust, will be the case ere long.

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR LUCY,

It has been observed by one, who has been several years in the country, and has had every opportunity of forming a correct judgment, that Southern India is "like a thirsty land longing for water at every pore, but with no man to water it."

Most fully is this corroborated by the frequent applications from various quarters to the Madras Corresponding Committee, for the establishment of a fresh Mission, or at least a school, in some new spot; and by their inability, from want of labourers, to comply with them. This has particularly been the case with the neighbourhood of Madras, where the Society established a Mission some years ago, but has been unable to keep it up effectively.

The chief station of this Mission was at Valaveram, one of several villages within a short distance of each other, and from twenty to thirty miles from Madras, the inhabitants of which, about 2,000 in number, are partly heathen, and partly Christian.

A few schools were opened—a native catechist was settled there, and the Mission was visited once a month by a Missionary from Madras, who administered the Lord's supper, baptized any who were prepared, and examined the schools and general state of the Mission. But the want of regular Missionaries at Madras has lately prevented the continuance even of this imperfect system ; and, except a few occasional visits from Europeans, the whole has for the last four or five years been under the sole care of the catechist.

While Mr. Blackman was at Madras, he had the superintendence of it, and very frequent were the applications for an increase in the number of schools, so that there might be one for each village ; and sometimes a similar request would come from some more distant place, which had before been unknown to him. Even now, though they have been so continually disappointed, they have not lost the desire for instruction, for it is not long since an European catechist, who passed a few days among them, gave, in his letters home, the same account of the earnestness with which they pressed him on the subject.

Could he have held out to them any hope of their desires being fulfilled, it would have been very encouraging to him, as he passed from village to village, to see them gathering round him of an

evening after their day's work, that they might hear from him the Word of Life, eagerly requesting baptism for their children, and urging their request for a Missionary and schoolmasters.

On one occasion, the headman of a heathen village, with two others of the principal people, ran some way after his palanquin with a petition from all their neighbours, to beg for the establishment of a school, and you may suppose how painful it was to him to be obliged, time after time, still to return the same answer, "The Committee have no means of helping you."

And yet, inadequate as one solitary native catechist, and four or five small schools, are to supply the spiritual wants of these poor people, they have been the means of spreading some rays of light through the surrounding darkness, and several instances of this have come to the knowledge of friends in Madras.

One of these was a heathen, who brought one of the usual requests to Mr. Blackman, and who interested and surprised him by asking many questions, which incidentally showed that he had by some means acquired a considerable knowledge of the Scriptures.

Another was that of a woman, whose son was in one of the schools, and was in the habit of repeating his lessons to her when he returned home in

the evening. By means of this simple teaching, her mind was gradually opened to Divine truth, the ten commandments especially struck her as condemning the idolatry in which her whole life had been passed : and after some time, she and several other members of her family, altogether twenty in number, put themselves under instruction, preparatory to baptism.

Some time ago a Missionary from Madras, making the usual circuit of the villages, received an invitation from one which he had never before visited. On his arrival, the people collected around him, and begged of him to take some means to send them a Missionary and schoolmaster who might teach them "the sacred book." The Missionary asked them what they knew about his "sacred book ;" upon which an old man, sitting near him, answered, "I know a little of it," and immediately began to repeat in Tamul, the first part of St. John's Gospel. He went through the first two or three chapters very correctly, to the astonishment, as you may suppose, of the Missionary ; nor was his surprise lessened, when he found that the old man was totally blind.

He eagerly inquired how this could have been, and it appeared that a lad from some distance, who had been taught in one of the schools I have been speaking of, had been for some months employed in this village, and having brought with him a portion

of the New Testament, had read it aloud so often, that the poor old man, who was much interested in it, had learnt a good deal by heart. The lad had left the village some time before, but the memory of the attentive hearer still retained the precious truths.

No Missionary, however, nor schoolmaster, could be sent, for there were no labourers to go, nor any funds to support them ; and if this old man ever fully received the Gospel to the saving of his soul, it was without any human instrumentality. O pray ye, therefore, the Lord of the harvest, to send forth labourers into the harvest, for truly the fields are white already.*

Some of the inhabitants of these villages are Roman Catholics, of whom there are a great many in Madras and the neighbourhood, and, indeed, throughout all Southern India. They are descended from the converts of Francis Xavier, and other Portuguese Missionaries, who accompanied the early settlers on these shores.

Lately two Irish Roman Catholic bishops and eleven priests have been sent out to Madras, and a college of Irish students and East Indian and native boarders has been opened in Black Town, professing to be furnished with every requisite for a literary and scientific education.

* These villages have now been transferred to the Society for Propagating the Gospel.

But, alas ! a large proportion of native Christians of this communion are scarcely to be distinguished from the heathen, except by the absence of the ashes on the forehead. Their principles and conduct dishonour the holy name by which they are called, and the desire of this Church to increase the *number* of *outward* adherents rather than to promote their spiritual welfare, has led her to accommodate herself in almost every respect to the practices around her. In many parts of the country you would hardly know a Roman Catholic from a heathen procession, unless your eye were to glance on the crucifix, or the figure of the Virgin carried aloft, amidst the din and pageant ; and if you went into one of their chapels, the images, and pictures, and relics, would almost make you think you were in some ancient heathen shrine, instead of a place for the service of Him who is to be worshipped in spirit and in truth. How grievous is it that the name of Christ should be thus dishonoured among the heathen !

Besides the Roman Catholics, there are a few Armenians living in Black Town, who have settled here for the purpose of trade. They have a church near the Esplanade ; and if you lived at the Mission-house, you would be interested in your early morning walks by a nice looking old man in a long dress of blue cloth, with a leathern girdle, and a string of beads round his neck, pacing back-

wards and forwards from the corner of one of the streets to the Esplanade. The movement of his lips, and the quick passing of his thumb and finger from one bead to another, tell you that he is engaged in exercises of devotion ; and presently the sound of the bell announces that the six o'clock service is about to begin, the church doors are opened, and he goes in to finish his morning worship.

I know not who he is, or where he comes from ; but I know that for years past he has been there morning after morning, and that his quiet, humble, serious look and manner, lead those who see him to hope and believe, that though clouded by the errors of his Church, yet that his mind and heart have received some portion of light from above.*

The Armenians are a very quiet people, and though they do not further the progress of Divine Truth among the heathen, yet they do not hinder it, and had we but more missionaries, we might hope to awaken them to a fuller knowledge of the Gospel. But as I have already shown you, we have not enough to keep up what has been already begun, and it is, therefore, in vain at present to hope for any extension of the plans of the Society.

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

* He is now dead.

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR LUCY,

How differently circumstanced are the women in India from those in our own happy land ! Here, where the light of the Gospel still shines brightly, they are considered as the companions and friends of their fathers, their brothers, or their husbands—their feelings are consulted, their comfort is promoted, and their mental improvement is attended to; for, known to be co-heirs of immortality, they are felt also to be helps meet upon earth.

But far different is the lot of the native women in India—their relation to God being unknown, their usefulness to man is the only object of consideration ; and it is taken for granted that the only end of their existence is to promote his temporal advantage.

The females of higher rank are secluded in their own apartments, where, confined to the society of their children and attendants, and seldom honoured by a visit from their husbands, they pass the tedious days in indolence or useless occupations.

In the lower ranks they are, in fact, household slaves, and when the work within doors is finished,

are thrust out to beat rice, to draw water, to collect cow-dung for fuel, or even to work as bricklayers' labourers, while their husbands perhaps are sitting at home, sleeping, or indulging in listless idleness.

Whether of high or low caste, the wife never ventures to eat with her husband or her sons ; she must stand behind till they have finished, and then, taking the leavings of their meal, must retire to eat it out of sight.*

You will readily suppose that their education is not attended to, and will not be surprised that while the boys are generally sent to school and taught to read, to write, and keep accounts, the poor girls are brought up in the most entire ignorance.

Generally speaking, the higher classes still remain inaccessible on this point to European influence, and allege that their daughters would be degraded by learning to read ! But happily, the lower classes are not so prejudiced, and though in most places they showed at first great unwillingness to allow their girls to go to school, yet now, as they begin to see the advantage of it, their unwillingness has very much given way, and in some places they are even anxious for their education.

* Bishop Heber says, "The worst food, the coarsest garments, the meanest work, and the hardest blows, seem to be considered the woman's portion."

But there is as yet a very small number of female schools in proportion to the multitude of children who might be instructed, for the parents are too poor to pay ; and all that are at present established in South India are entirely supported by the liberality of Christian friends.

The first movement towards female education in Madras itself was from the natives. In 1824, several parents applied to Mrs. Ridsdale to establish a day school for their daughters. She did so, and others arose in consequence ; but no regular plan was adopted till 1830, when some ladies residing there, determined to form themselves into a Committee, and to establish a larger number of schools.

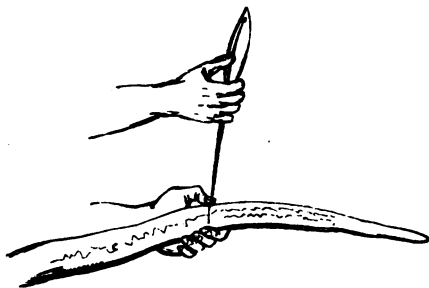
They were encouraged by finding the children willing to come, and very intelligent and quick in learning their lessons ; and after a little while, a large room was built in Black Town for a central school.

This school is under the charge of Mrs. Winckler, whose lively and affectionate interest for the children is met on their part by a fondness for school, and a desire for improvement, which leads to the assured hope, that her work of faith and labour of love will not be thrown away.

There are generally about a hundred and forty girls present, and you would be delighted to see them, with their gentle yet eager countenances,

standing in their classes, or more frequently sitting on the ground with their legs crossed, learning their lessons, or knitting, or working, or writing ; and I assure you there are not many schools in England that could show such beautifully neat work as is sent out from this.

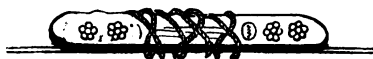
You would wonder to see them write their copies, for, instead of paper, they have each of them an *olei*, or long strip of the palmyra leaf, about an inch and a half broad, and one or two feet long. This they hold in the left hand, and in their right, instead of pen and ink, they grasp a style, or sharp iron instrument, which they rest against a notch in the left thumb nail, and with it scratch the words on the leaf. They afterwards rub it over with powdered charcoal, or the leaf of some particular plant, which, sinking into the scratches, makes the letters black or green.*



* A clergyman who has sometimes preached in the Mission church at Palamcottah, told me that the first time

To us this would be a difficult and awkward manner of writing ; but the natives, from long habit, write in this way very neatly and quickly.

You would wonder too at their school books, which are of the same material as their copies, only the strips are shorter, and all cut to the same length and breadth ; they are kept together by a string fastened to a shell, which is long enough to allow the leaves to be sufficiently separated to be read, and when they are not in use, is twisted round them. Sometimes the outside leaves are ornamented with various devices, and when nicely executed, the whole is remarkably neat and pretty.



The parents of some of the children at Mrs. Winckler's school are employed in the service of Europeans, and being therefore comparatively well off, can afford to give them proper clothing, and to allow them two meals a-day. But the rest are extremely poor and wretched ; they come to school half-naked, very dirty, and sometimes without food ;

he gave out his text, there was suddenly such a scratching, like the nibbling of mice, that he could not think what it could be, till he found it was the seminary boys writing down the text upon their oleis.

so that it not unfrequently happens, that a girl, when standing up in her class, will become so faint from hunger and exhaustion, as to be obliged to leave her place and lie down.

Miserable indeed is the outward condition of many of these poor girls: and yet, happy are they if they learn, as we may hope some of them do, the way to obtain true riches—gold tried in the fire, and raiment made white in the blood of the Lamb. Their parents are too poor to have even a house of their own, they live in the piols of the houses of the better classes, sheltering themselves with a screen of cocoa-nut leaves or bamboos, without any furniture except a few chatties,* in one of which they make their fire, and in the others dress their food, or keep their rice and water. Sometimes, but not always, they have a mat to sleep upon.

The poverty of these poor people obliges them to eat whatever they can get, fish, dead animals, and any kind of grain boiled soft; but the higher classes are very particular in their diet, and any departure from the established customs would occasion loss of caste.

The food of these last is almost exclusively rice and vegetables, with curry, and sometimes a little assafoetida, which they say gives a flavour resembling animal food.

* Earthen vessels of various forms and sizes.

When at home and alone, their food is served to them in small brass basins ; but when they receive visitors, or are on a journey, they only use plates of leaves, that they may avoid all risk of defilement.

These plates are very pretty, and are made of one leaf, if large enough, or if not, of several small ones, pinned together with little splinters of the stalk.

A dinner party among the richer Bramins must be a curious sight. The guests are of course seated on the floor, and before each of them twenty or thirty of these plates are set, filled with various kinds of food. These are all placed on the bare floor ; which, instead of a table cloth, is adorned with patterns of flowers, &c., very prettily laid out in sands of different bright colours, in frames, which are removed when the feast is concluded.

From the same fear of defilement, they never allow their *earthen* vessels to be seen ; but when they go to the bazaar or the well, will only take those of brass or lead, as these can be more thoroughly cleansed than the others.

But I have wandered away very far from Mrs. Winckler and her school, and will now return there for a few minutes.

There are examinations held every month, but besides these, there is an annual one, when all the Madras schools under the Ladies' Committee are

collected together at the central school, and the upper classes from each school are examined.

A lady, who has several times been present, gives me the following account:—

“ The room is spacious and lofty, with pillars along the sides ; at one end were the benches for the visitors, and the girls who were to be examined, about ninety in number, were seated at the other. The younger ones were ranged along the sides of the room, between the pillars and the outer wall, and the number altogether was above 500. On a table in the middle of the room were specimens of their work and writing, and on another, the rewards intended for distribution.

“ It was a very striking sight, when I first went in, to see all these girls seated on the floor, with olei copies lying before them, and books or samplers in their hands.

“ As I was early, I had time to look round the room ; and one of the girls was called out that I might see her write. There was not a blank leaf left, so Daniel (the Madras head catechist), who was present, just took one of the written copies, and splitting it, made two fresh pages, the girl laid the leaf upon her knee, and wrote a few lines very neatly and quickly.

“ As soon as the visitors had arrived, and all was ready, a Tamul hymn was sung to an English

tune; this was followed by a prayer in English, which was interpreted by Daniel into Tamul; then the Lord's prayer in Tamul, in which the girls all joined.

"They were first examined in Gen. xviii., which they had prepared on purpose, and they answered extremely well. One of the chaplains, who was there, then asked them questions on different parts of Scripture, and this interested me even more than the former, as they were quite unprepared, and yet gave very satisfactory answers.

"They seemed thoroughly to understand the fall of Adam and the remedy provided: 'What did Adam and Eve lose by eating the forbidden fruit?' 'They lost the likeness of God.' 'Is man now born in the likeness of God?' 'Illé,' (No,) from many voices. I lost a great deal from not understanding Tamul; for, though the clergyman translated the questions and answers, it, of course, was not the same thing, particularly as, when several answered together, he only repeated the answer which seemed the most appropriate. When, however, the answer was only 'Ama,' (Yes,) or 'Illé,' (No,) I could understand and fully enjoy it.

"They were well acquainted with the history of Abraham. When asked about his faith, one girl made a long quotation from Romans iv., which she

applied very nicely: 'Was Abraham justified by his righteousness?' 'Illé,' from many voices. 'By what then?' 'By faith.' 'By whose righteousness?' 'The LORD's.' They seemed quite to understand the alone way of salvation through JESUS CHRIST; and when asked whether Vishnoo or Siva could save them, the 'Illé' that sounded through the room, seemed to come from their hearts.

"It is a painful part of the intercourse with these poor girls, to know that, after they have been thus declaring, and apparently with sincerity, that their idols cannot save them, they return home and join their parents in worshipping them."

There have not, however, been wanting instances of girls being so convinced of the falsehood of their own religion, and the truth of Christianity, that they have made an uncompromising confession of it, and suffered much in consequence.

One girl refused to accompany her friends to a heathen temple, and when forcibly carried there, still refused to worship the idol; and another was driven from her home, and obliged to take refuge in the house of one of the catechists. I wish I could tell you more about these two girls, but I have never heard of them since.

"When the examination was over, the girls came round to show their work and writing, and the

absence of the English curtsy was more than supplied by their graceful salaam.*

"The rewards were then distributed, consisting chiefly of bags, needle books, and scissors, sent by friends in England; and the kind donors would indeed have been gratified, could they have seen the pleasure they afforded, and the smiles and salaams with which they were received."

I was much amused by an account I heard from the same lady of a doll being shown to some of these children. It was dressed as an English housemaid; but, as they cannot be persuaded that there are any white people except ladies and gentlemen, they were not a little astonished and perplexed when told that this was an English ayah. "What! ayahs dress like ladies?" "Do they live with them—and eat with them?" "Do they have knives and forks, or do they eat with their fingers?" "Shoes and stockings, too! Does it rain there? Is it not dirty? Do they wear them when they go out?" were a few of the expressions of surprise that were called forth.

The idea, however, of all white people being ladies and gentlemen, is not confined to these poor children, for a gentleman who had lived in India from his earliest childhood, and came to England

* Gently bowing the head, with the hand on the forehead.

for the first time a little while ago, told me, that on his arrival, he could with difficulty divest himself of the same notion, and when walking in the streets of London, frequently found himself wondering where all the servants and low-caste people could be.

But my letter has run on to an unusual length, and I will only add that

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T

LETTER X.

MY DEAR LUCY,

I WISH I could give you a satisfactory account of the education of the Heathen and Mohammedan boys in Madras ; but I grieve to say, that the Church of England has made no effectual attempt to instruct these youths in the truths of the Christian religion.

Lately, however, I rejoice to find that the Church Missionary Society has resolved, under God, to establish a school upon an enlarged plan, particularly with a view to the education of the higher classes of natives ;* and I earnestly hope that no want of funds, or any other difficulty, will arise to prevent this most important measure from being carried into execution.

But I must not omit to give you a little account of "Bishop Corrie's Grammar School."

As I mentioned in a former letter, the population of Black Town consists partly of East Indians.

* This has since been done in Tinnevely by the establishment of a Native English Day-school under Mr. Cruickshanks, which is producing fruit to the praise and glory of God.

These form a distinct class; and, till within these few years, the conduct of Europeans towards them was such, as has now, it is to be hoped, for ever passed away.

The consequence was, that with the exception of a few, whose natural vigour of mind enabled them to rise above the disadvantages of their situation, they were sunk in a kind of listless torpor. It was difficult to rouse the boys to take interest even in a game of play, and the chief concern of all, whether rich or poor, seemed to be to make a good appearance in the eyes of others, whilst their opposition to the truth was so great, that when Mr. Ridsdale first entered upon his duties at the Mission chapel, he was frequently in danger of personal violence when he left the pulpit.

But after a time, the word of God took root among them, and by degrees, many were, by means of his and Mr. Lovelace's ministry, brought to a saving knowledge of the Gospel. Mrs. Ridsdale also established two small day schools for the poorer classes among them, and Mr. Ridsdale collected a few boys into a Sunday school. They used to come decked out with rings and chains, and perfumed with attar of rose, or oil of sandal wood, when perhaps they had not curry and rice to eat at home.

After some time, by the exertions of Mr. Blackman

and his friends, the "Parental Academy" was opened, with the view of giving the opportunity of a better education to the higher classes among them, but chiefly from want of an efficient master, it nearly expired.

In 1837, under the sanction, and I might almost say, by means of the faith and zeal, of Bishop Corrie, the Grammar School was established which now bears his name, and in a remarkable manner, a superior master was met with, and appointed.

It is founded on the principle of giving a sound general and religious education, in accordance with our Established Church, and receives East Indians, as well as Europeans, whose parents are not in a station of life to send them to England, as either boarders or day scholars, and admits a few natives, only as day scholars.

The attempt was so new, that great anxiety as to its success was felt by the promoters of it, and it was the subject of many an earnest hope, and many a prayer. Six months passed quietly and rapidly away, the time arrived for the first public examination, and to the delight of all who were interested in it, the change that appeared in the pupils was beyond their most sanguine expectations. It was not the quantity of knowledge they had acquired, though that was in a very fair proportion, but it was the spirit and intelligence that pervaded

the whole school, and formed so marked a contrast to their former listlessness and indifference. It was as if their minds had suddenly been unchained, and were rejoicing in the exercise of their newly acquired powers.

Since that time, though there could not of course be another such burst of intellect, the school has gone on steadily and prosperously ; and were you to pass some Saturday evening with the older pupils at the Mission house ; or from the window to watch the spirit with which the younger ones play on the flat roof of the Grammar School ; or, in one of your evening drives were to pass the Esplanade during one of their games of cricket, you would acknowledge that there is no longer in them any deficiency of either bodily or mental energy ; while you will rejoice to know that the improvement is not confined to themselves alone, but is beginning to have a considerable influence on the whole community.

Some of the *native* boys are placed there by the Church Missionary Society ; and some of the *boarders* receive their education (like Savarimuttoo) by means of a private fund, raised by friends in England. Two of these have been admitted into the Church Missionary Institution, and their places supplied by two others, who are going on very satisfactorily.

The success which attended this effort for the

improvement of the boys, encouraged the attempt to provide the same advantages for their sisters, and led to the establishment of the "Ladies' Institution" at Vepery, upon the same principle and general plan as the Grammar School, except that natives are not admissible. Two ladies were engaged in England; the passage of both was very kindly paid for by the Society for Female Education in the East, and their outfit was provided by private friends. They entered upon their work in September, 1838, and for more than a year everything went on most encouragingly. The number of pupils was greater than had been expected, and their improvement very satisfactory in every respect.

Unhappily, circumstances arose which in the beginning of 1840, led to this connexion being dissolved; and the school must have fallen to the ground, had it not been for the unremitting exertions of the Ladies' Committee in Madras. By their means it was kept up, and is now, I trust, beginning again to flourish under the care of two other ladies who left England in the spring. The outfit and passage of one of these were again provided by the liberality of private friends, and those of the other by the continued kindness of the Society for Female Education.*

* It is now flourishing more than it has ever done before, under the care of two very valuable English ladies.

Indeed, the East Indians in Madras owe much to this Society, for they had before (early in 1838) sent out another lady, to whose school I must now introduce you.

If you will again come with me into Black Town, and walking from the Mission house along the side of the garden, go through the Church compound and cross the street that passes it, you will come to a nice comfortable house, where a day school is kept for the daughters of East Indians, whose situation in life is just below those at the Ladies' Institution.

If you go in, you will find twenty-five or twenty-six nice pleasant-looking little girls, all busy and happy ; but you cannot be so much aware of their improvement as those are who assisted in the first establishment of this school, and who feared that their habits of indolence, untidiness, and self-indulgence would never be overcome. I trust the great change in these respects is only the forerunner of a far more important change in heart and spirit ; and that by degrees many may be raised up, both from this and from the Ladies' Institution, who, from having been born in the country, will prove more efficient teachers of the native females than Europeans can ever be.

The " Church Missionary Institution " has been established in Madras, for the purpose of preparing natives, and young men born in the country, exclu-

sively for Missionary work, either as catechists or ordained Missionaries. One of the students is now a catechist at Masulipatam ; five still remain, most of whom, if not all, were educated in the Grammar School, and all of whom give a good hope of being devoted in heart to the service of their Master.*

They have a native Sunday school of their own, and are beginning in various ways to form habits of future usefulness.

Part of the house affords a home to those native day scholars at the Grammar School, who come from distant stations, and have no friends at Madras with whom they can reside.

There is much that is interesting in these native boys, some of whom are the children or orphans of pious parents ; and a little circumstance lately occurred, so characteristic, that I must repeat it.

The clergyman at the head of the Institution was roused from his sleep at day-break, on new year's day, by the sound of voices, sweetly singing,—

* Since this was written, six young men (three of whom are natives), who received their education in this Institution, have been ordained, and are stationed as follows :—Rev. James Spratt, at Meignanapuram ; Rev. J. B. Rodgers, and Rev. Dewasagayam Gnanamuttoo, at Madras ; Rev. Jesudaren John, at Palamcottah ; Rev. George Matthun, in Travancore ; and Rev. J. E. Sharkey, at Masulipatam. Several others are also engaged in Missionary work.

“ O God, our help in ages past,
Our hope for years to come ;
Our refuge from the stormy blast,
And our eternal home.”

He found they were the voices of these boys, who, entirely from their own thought, were thus welcoming the opening year ; and, trifling as the incident was, it awakened in his heart many a feeling of joy and hope—for none but those who are bearing the burden and heat of the day can know how the heart is refreshed by the smallest indication of spiritual feeling.

New year's day is a great day at Madras. All the offices and shops are closed ; and the natives choose this day for making presents to their masters or employers. Old Ramiah, a heathen writer in the Church Missionary Office, always brings a handsome brass dish filled with beautiful plantains, and sometimes accompanies it with a present of Brahminee sugar plums. The bricklayer will bring models of fruit in chunam ; the tailor, a bunch of flowers in wax ; John and Timothy (Cornelius' sons), a specimen of penmanship ; and the children of the servants all have some little gift to present,—cakes, or flowers, or gilded limes.

The people are very fond of flowers, and make them up into very pretty bunches, or sometimes

lay them in a piece of the transparent bright green plantain leaf, which they fold into a kind of sheath, and fasten together with long thorns. And they often weave a garland of jessamine, or some sweet scented flower, and throw it round the neck of a friend or a visitor.

But, alas! this natural love for flowers is degraded to the service of their idols, and their choicest blossoms, their sweetest garlands, are reserved for those hideous blocks of wood or stone. O! that their eyes were opened to see the truth, and trace in every bud and blossom the love of Him who gives us all we have or hope for.

But I have told you enough about Madras, and will proceed to some of the other missionary stations.

The first shall be Mayaveram;* and in my next letter I will give you some account of the journey thither.

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

* The nearest Church Missionary Society's station, 160 miles south of Madras.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR LUCY,

WHEN setting out on a journey in England, you have only to pack up the clothes and books you are likely to want, and to get into whatever carriage you intend to travel by, knowing that you will be able to order your dinner, or take up your abode for the night, at some comfortable inn upon the road.

But you must make very different preparations for travelling in India. Your palanquin must be not only your carriage, but your bed, your library, your wardrobe, and the bearer of almost everything you will require on your journey. You may pack a few of your clothes in the imperial on the top, but must leave room in it for your tea things, your knife and fork, candlestick, wax candles, bread, tea, sugar, pepper, salt, and, in short, for all those minor comforts, which, while we possess, we so seldom think of, or are grateful for, but of which we sadly feel the want, when deprived of them.

On the outside a tea-kettle must repose among the folds of a coarse blue cloth which lies on the top, and occasionally serves as a cover to the palanquin; a gurglet of water, in a wicker case, is slung

at the back, and some place must be found for a camp stool, which is by turns to serve as a seat, a table, or a washing-stand.

Within the palanquin is a mattress and pillow, two little drawers, and everything to make you comfortable by night, and neat in the day.

All being ready, you get into it, the bearers lift it on their shoulders, and you set out on your strange journey. The poles of the palanquin are



carried by three men in front and three behind, while six more run by the side, ready to change with them every three or four minutes. The "mussalchee," or torch bearer, runs also with them, holding in his left hand the torch, made of twisted cotton cloth, and in his right a flask of oil, with its long bamboo neck, to feed the flame. But if you do not take care, you will be sadly annoyed with

the smoke, for they always contrive, for what reason I know not, to get to the windward of the palanquin, and when sent round to the other side, will soon return unless you watch them. But your party is not yet complete, you must have a "cavady coolie," to carry the remainder of your books and clothes, in two tin boxes, fastened to the ends of a long bamboo, and slung across his shoulder. But do not intrust him with your provisions, or anything you are likely to require for immediate use, lest he should loiter on the road, and you should find yourself in the morning, as I have known it to be the case, without bread for breakfast, or a change of clothing.

You must not be frightened at the strange noise the bearers make; nor as a lady, a friend of mine, once did, attempt to stop them, thinking they are groaning from pain or over weight. It is their constant habit, and you will soon get so accustomed to it, as to forget they are making it.

You will start probably about five or six o'clock in the afternoon, and as you proceed, the stillness and coolness of the evening air, the clearness of the atmosphere, giving to the stars a brilliancy unknown in colder climates, or revealing the moon as a globe of light suspended in the firmament, and the evening planet almost like a smaller moon; the fire-flies flitting round and round the trees,—all

combine to give you a feeling of romance and delight, perhaps scarcely known before:—while the only sounds you hear, are the strange noises and the footfall of the bearers, or the distant croaking of the frogs, which your inexperienced ear will probably mistake for the bleating of lambs or kids. “Sounds inharmonious in themselves and harsh,” but not displeasing when all else around is silent.

Leaving Madras by a southern road, you cross the river Adyar, with its ornamented banks, and pass near your early friend St. Thomas’s Mount. A little on your right, but out of sight, is the smaller mount of the same name, with the Roman Catholic Church on the summit. Tradition asserts, that here the apostle Thomas suffered martyrdom,—that here, he who was once so weak in faith, was strengthened and upheld to lay down his life for truths he had before found it so difficult to receive. Some, however, think it was another holy man of the same name, but at a later period; but all agree that this was the spot where he who first brought the tidings of salvation to this people sitting in darkness, was, after being permitted to make many converts, put to death by a heathen prince.

Your first night’s run will take you to Sadras, near which, though not in the direct road, are “The Seven Pagodas,” (said to be properly “Siven’s Pagodas,” as being dedicated to Siven or

Síva,) but these celebrated remains of an age too remote for any thing but fable, have been so often and so fully described, that I shall not dwell upon them. I will only say, that if you wish to see them under the soft radiance of the setting sun, you must defer your visit to them till just before your departure from Sadras on the following evening; but you will do better to turn out of your road on your way thither, so as either to "view them by the pale moonlight," or to watch the waves kindling with the golden light of morning, till you almost believe the Hindoo legend, and fancy you can discern the glittering domes and pinnacles of the once proud city* of the "mighty Bâli."

Very melancholy, however, are these ruins to the Christian's heart, as his thoughts run back to the unknown period of their erection, and he endeavours in vain to trace through the intervening ages any thing beyond a transient gleam of light, that has as yet visited this vast country.

You will be struck as you travel on by the *choultries*, which are very numerous, both on the roads and on the banks of rivers. They have been built at different times by wealthy natives, for the accommodation of travellers, particularly of pil-

* The proper name of the place is Mavalipoor (Mahavâlipooram), "the city of the Great Bâli."—See *Asiatic Researches*, and *The Curse of Kehama*.

grims, for whose use, one, or sometimes more, are attached to the larger pagodas ; and before so many travellers' bungalows had been provided, Europeans also were often very glad to take shelter in them.

They vary greatly in size and beauty, and some of them are very splendid ; but, in general, the smaller ones consist merely of a kind of deep colonnade, the back being a solid wall, and the sides and front having only the open pillars which support the roof. The floor is paved, and raised one or two feet above the ground. The larger ones have usually a shallower colonnade with a door in the middle of the back, opening into a cloistered quadrangle, which serves for the temporary home of the passing traveller, while the bazaar, which is seldom wanting, supplies his few and simple wants of rice, curry-stuff, and chatties.

I must introduce you as you pass along to the bungalow at Alemparva. It is, I believe, almost the only private one* upon the road, and belongs to a person of French extraction, who has retained the courtesy of his nation without its affectation.

As you approach it, you pass, on your left, one of those quadrangular choultries I have just described, and on your right is a large and beautiful *banian*, that curious tree, whose widely-spread

* A traveller's bungalow has since been built here by Government.

ing branches throw out perpendicular fibres, which growing downwards till they reach the ground, strike root, and each becomes a separate tree, till the originally single stem is in time multiplied into an interwoven grove.

The bungalow itself stands in a small compound, and is backed by cocoa-nut trees, whose former leaves have furnished the materials for this singular building. The long slender leaflets on one side of the leaf are notched and turned back, and being then woven in with those of the opposite side, form a narrow mat, of which one of the outer edges is the middle fibre of the leaf. A double row of these mats, fastened to the outer and inner side of stakes driven into the ground, serve for the walls—the roof is of the same material, and so are the partitions which separate two or three small bed-rooms from the long narrow sitting room. The fence that surrounds the compound is like the walls, while the floor of the bungalow is merely the sand of the natural soil.

You may, however, contrive to make yourself very comfortable here, and may have a better meal than at some other places on your road; for, though you must depend on your own resources for bread, yet you can get good fish, and the coffee is excellent.

But I do not intend to enter into any regular

description of your supposed journey ; I only wish to give you some general idea of the way in which your days and nights will be passed, and now and then to draw your attention to some striking object on the road.

At four or five o'clock in the morning you will be roused by the bearers' cry of "Sepôy, Sepôy !" and by finding your palanquin set down at the door of a travellers' bungalow. The summons is quickly answered by a respectable looking man, often with a white beard, and with a red or white turban, whose red soldier's jacket over his native dress tells you that he has belonged to our Indian army. The door is soon unlocked, and you and your palanquin are admitted.

These travellers' bungalows have been erected by Government, at intervals along the principal roads for the use of European travellers, and consist usually of two rooms, each having a bath room attached to it. The only furniture is a table, and two or three chairs, with now and then a cot ; but many of them have lately been supplied with a small religious library by the liberality of private friends.

Your first business will be to unpack your palanquin, and then to bathe and dress ; and by the time you have finished, your tea kettle is boiling, milk and eggs have been procured from the neigh-

bouring bazaar, and you sit down to a hungry breakfast.

After breakfast your tea-things must be washed and re-packed, and you will then have some hours for reading, writing, or meditation, as you feel most disposed.

Your bearers have left you to get food and rest, the Sepôy and Peon in charge have laid themselves down to sleep, and you are left to the enjoyment of the most perfect quiet and repose. Nature itself partakes of the general stillness, not a breath of air is stirring to move "the market flag" that points out the neighbouring bazaar; and the shadow of the cocoa-nut has become a fixed spot upon the ground.

Sometimes, however, the silence is broken by the distant sound of the village drum, calling the inhabitants to join in some idolatrous procession, and painfully reminding you that you are in the midst of a heathen land.

Dinner time now approaches; a fowl has been procured for you, and by the help of the shadow of the bungalow, which serves him as a dial, the Sepôy contrives to bring your curry and rice at the time you ordered it.

After dinner, if it is tolerably cool, you will probably saunter out to look about you. If a tank is near, your eye will catch the bright deep red

blossom of the sacred lotus with its "broad and buoyant" leaves, now lying motionless on the water, and now gently flapping up and down as a rippling wave may pass across the surface. A herd of buffaloes will probably be there enjoying the delicious coolness—their whole bodies below the water, with only "their nostrils raised to meet the air."*

If you pass a choultry, you will be amused and interested with the busy scene. Under a top of tamarind or some other spreading trees, bullock bandies will be standing, laden with cotton, skins of oil, or the heavy baggage of some traveller. The oxen have been taken out, and are enjoying their evening meal of straw, while the tinkling of the bells upon their necks, tells you how diligently they are employed. The native oxen are different from ours, they are shorter and thicker made, and have a hump between their shoulders, and a remarkably large dewlap with a kind of fringe. Their colour is white, but at the Pongul feast their owners paint their horns with various colours, and hang garlands of flowers round their necks.

Some of the natives are meanwhile engaged in making their simple purchases at the bazaar, others

* See Southey's accurate descriptions in his "Curse of Kehama."

are sitting in groups under the shelter of the choultry, while the rest have established themselves in different parties in the tope—their little fires shining brightly among the trees, while their dark and slender figures, and even the chatties in which their rice is boiling, all add to the picturesque effect.

If you pass one of these choultries in the night, the scene is changed—nothing remains of their little fires but the glimmer, or flickering flame of the dying embers—the people have laid down to sleep wrapped from head to foot in their white cloths like the Egyptian mummies, and the only moving being is the Peon in charge, who, whether you visit a choultry by night or day, is sure to come forward to make salaam, and show that he is there.

It is now, however, time for you to resume your journey ; your bearers make their appearance, and you are at first puzzled at one part of their preparations. Two men, taking each the end of a cloth, five or six yards in length, fold it together like a tablecloth ; one of them stands fast, while the other putting his own end of the cloth round his waist, winds himself round and round in it as tightly as he can, till he reaches his companion, when taking the other end from him, he twists it

into his waist. The whole party do the same, and thus "with their loins girded," they are ready to start.

But it will make my letter too long, if I complete your journey now ; and I shall, therefore, reserve the remainder for another opportunity. In the meantime,

Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER XII.

MY DEAR LUCY,

DURING the first part of your journey to the South, your route will occasionally lie along the sea-shore ; and the night scene will be diversified by the soft moonlight playing on the distant waters, or touching the nearer spray with its silvery beams. The croaking of the frogs will be exchanged for the onward dashing or retiring murmur of the waves upon the beach ; and in the fulness of a rejoicing heart you will be ready to cry, " O Lord, how manifold are thy works ; the earth is full of thy riches, so is the great and wide sea also."

Sometimes the bearers will run along so deep into the water, for their own refreshment, that, with the sea on either side of you, you would feel alarmed, were you in other hands. But it is extraordinary what unhesitating confidence you involuntarily as it were, place, not only in the dexterity, but in the integrity of purpose among the natives. Nor is this confidence misplaced, for, by the providence of God,

the moral influence of Europeans over this people is so great, that you might travel alone from Madras to Cape Comorin, and often find yourself thirty or forty miles from any European, without the slightest danger of any advantage being taken of your defenceless situation.

But alas ! “ in vain with lavish kindness,” has our gracious God here strewn his choicest gifts of nature ; for throughout your whole progress, your eye is met, and your heart saddened, by some token of idolatry.

Now, resting against the stem of one of those beautiful trees you so often pass, your attention is attracted by a flat stone, carved with two snakes entwined like the Caduceus of old, and near it, perhaps, the figure of a Swâmy, with some poor native prostrate before it.

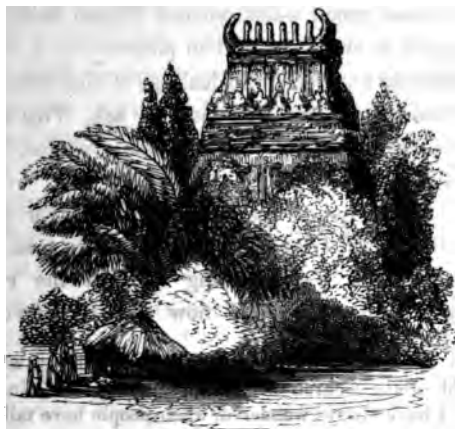
At another time, your curiosity will be excited by figures of horses, made of pottery, standing under trees. They are strange looking objects, of various sizes, some larger than life, and others very small, but all made after the same model, with short thick necks, and covered with trappings ; occasionally, but not often, they have riders on them. They are white-washed, and there are often twenty or thirty together ; sometimes ranged side by side, staring at you as you pass, and sometimes placed in a hollow

square, with their faces towards the centre. They are evidently of different dates, some looking new and fresh, as if just placed there; and others partly broken, and nearly hidden by the long grass that has grown up around them.

They are very numerous in the province of Tanjore, and seem to be offerings for some blessing received; and as the Rajah of Tanjore is of Mahratta extraction, they are probably figures of Candoba, an incarnation of Siva, and the great local divinity of the Mahrattas, as he is generally represented as an armed horseman.

You will pass near, or perhaps through, Porto Novo; where, within the last few years, the first iron works in India have been established. The ore is brought from Salem, and is said to be the best yet discovered, superior even to that from the Swedish mines.

Soon after leaving Porto Novo, you will reach the Coleroon; but I shall pass over the rest of your journey, only calling your attention to the lofty Goprums you will occasionally see, till you come within sight of that of Mayaveram, which is visible at some distance, though the town itself is so hidden in trees, that you see nothing of it till you are close.



GOPRUM OF AN HEATHEN TEMPLE.

You lose sight again even of the Goprum, as you descend to cross the Câvery, that noble river, of which I must give you a little longer account.

It rises in the Ghauts (the range of mountains that divides Southern India into East and West); and, after running three hundred miles through the country of Mysore, is first seen in its beauty and utility at Seringapatam. Here, rushing rapidly over the iron-coloured rocks that lie scattered in its bed, it encircles the fort and island, so memorable in our Eastern history, where the noble persevering courage, and skilful conduct of Lord Harris, were the means of planting the English

flag on those proud walls, whence Tippoo Saib had once hoped to crush our Indian power.

Wonderful have been the dealings of God towards us in these lands; and well may we ask, *Why* is it that He has given us such glorious victories, and such vast dominions?*

For several hundred miles this noble river traverses that extensive country, so often the scene of British valour; now winding through the rich scenery of the plains, and now dashing down a

* An old labouring man, in a village in Kent, when first told of the Church Missionary Society, exclaimed, "Well, I have always wondered, when people have talked about India, why it was that God had given us that large country, *but now I know.*" He immediately became a collector, and would every year bring 6*l.* or 7*l.*, which he had received in small sums from his neighbours. The writer of this once asked him how he was able to collect so much, and was much struck by his answer, "Why, Ma'am, I take some Missionary papers with me, and go of an evening after my work to a cottage, and ask the people if I shall read to them; they generally are very glad I should, so I sit down and read till sometimes they cry, and I cry too, and then they are sure to give something." He often used to say, "Ah! if I were young, and God would let me go, I would not stay in England. But I am too old—he must go instead," alluding to a beloved grandson, whom he had brought up, and whom he ardently desired should be employed in Missionary work. The desire of his heart was granted, and one of the last pieces of earthly intelligence that reached his dying ear, was, that his grandson had entered on his labour in a distant land.

height of three hundred feet. During great part of its progress, it is nearly a mile in breadth, but a very small portion of its waters ever reaches the sea. They are drawn off by innumerable channels on either side, and these are intersected by smaller ones, so as to convey the precious stream to a considerable distance.

The Câvery, like all the rivers on this coast, is affected by the regular monsoon in October. The torrents of rain that then pour down soon swell its streams, and, "full of water," it rolls along, bringing with it fertility and joy. The people hasten to conduct the water through the many little channels over their paddy fields, and when the surface has been softened into mud, they rudely plough it, sow their seed, and continue to water it with the foot till the rice has grown to some height. In February they get in their harvest, and for the few next months the ground lies fallow.

But there is a *second* harvest preparing for Tanjore, and all the region through which this river flows. In June, the monsoon of the *Malabar* coast sets in; the clouds, driven by the south-west wind against the mountains whence the Câvery has its source, and hanging round their summits in wreaths of mist, imperceptibly feed the little streams that "run among the hills," and these, flowing into the main channel, occasion a second rising of the river.

Again its fertilizing streams flow down, again is the seed sown and watered, and before October, God has again "crowned the year with his goodness," and for the second time "the valleys are covered over with corn, they shout for joy, they also sing."

A writer on the "Falls of the Câvery,"* gives the following animated description of the effect of the sudden swelling of the waters:—

"The cheering sound of this great stream in its descent is a fit herald of the gladness it conveys to the plains below, where all nature languishes in the month of June with heat and drought. Without any previous notice, in the midst sometimes of a radiant sunshine, or in the stillness of the night, it comes sweeping down with plenty and with healing in its course.

"Those only who have seen the haggard eyes and emaciated forms of the people, when its descent has been delayed by a late season, and who have also witnessed the joyful countenances which proclaim its timely arrival, can form an adequate notion of its value. It seems, indeed, to be one universal jubilee. Men, women, and children, herds and flocks, and birds, and everything within reach of its shores crowd to its banks," &c.

* "Narrative of a Journey to the Falls of the Câvery," &c., by Lieut. H. Jervis.

How does this illustrate the description in the 104th Psalm, "Every beast of the field quenching its thirst," and the "fowls of the heaven," singing among the fresh foliage of the trees upon its banks!

The river, at the place where you will cross it, is very picturesque, and adorned with a number of cloister-like choultries standing among the trees which line the banks, and having each by the side of it a flight of stone steps for the convenience of the pilgrims who come to wash away their sins in this sacred river.

You are taken down the bank, and as your bearers seldom find any difficulty in crossing the stream and carrying you up the opposite side, a few minutes' run brings you to Mayaveram.

This is a large town, containing about 10,000 souls, and standing in the midst of a large heathen population in the surrounding villages. This part of the country is, as Bishop Heber calls it, "the most favoured land of Brahminism," many of the villages are considered sacred, and have Tiri or Tri (holy) prefixed to their name.

Except the sub-collector of the district, the nearest European residents are at Combaconum, twenty-two miles distant; and a missionary stationed here can rarely meet with his fellow-countrymen, except as they may be passing through upon a journey.

Upon entering the town, you will pass through a tolerably good street, the houses separated from each other by little gardens, till you come to the fine broad road which leads to Tanjore. Turning down it to the right, and leaving on one side a little swâmy house, and under the trees on the other a group of those mysterious horses, a few steps will bring you to the gate of the Mission compound.

And here I must just introduce you to two occupiers of the small grass plot at the side of the house—one of them a small stone idol of a foot and a half, or two feet high, which had been taken from some deserted shrine,—and close beside it the immense bone of a whale, twelve or fifteen feet in length. Mr. Barenbruck often made use of these in his conversation with the heathen who visited him, asking them if they really thought that little piece of stone could have made that wonderful and curious bone.

Leaving you here for the present,

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER XIII.



WATER CARRIER.

MY DEAR LUCY,
My last letter left you just arrived at Mayaveram,
poor Mayaveram! "But why *poor*?" you will
naturally ask. Truly Mayaveram is not poor in
the eyes of its heathen inhabitants. With it

handsome pagodas, thronged on days of festival by multitudes of worshippers from the country round ; situated so near the sacred Câvery, the resort of thousands of pilgrims, who hope its waters will wash away their sins ; and honoured by being the abode of so many Bramins—it is in their eyes a favoured and a holy place.

Nor would it appear poor to the careless eye of a passing European. He would be struck with the beauty and fertility of the country, with the well watered fields, and the two-fold harvest ; and though the Mission premises are desolate and uninhabited, yet they might be soon restored to neatness and comfort ; the little chapel and the seminary are both within the compound ; the garden, though neglected, is well laid out ; and a little care would soon bring back the myrtle hedge to its former beauty.

But Mayaveram *is* poor, for she has long been under the chastening hand of God, and no Mission in Southern India has experienced such reverses as this sweet attractive spot.*

The Rev. Theophilus Barenbruck was its first missionary ; he removed to it from Tranquebar, in 1825, and the work flourished under him till 1830, when illness forced him to return to Europe. In 1833, the Rev. C. Winckler, who succeeded him, was obliged to do the same ; and with the exception

* See note on page 124.

of the Rev. B. Schmid's residence for a few months, Mayaveram can scarcely be said to have enjoyed the benefit of a regular ministry, from that time to the present.

The Rev. H. Applegate was appointed to it in 1837 ; he went, and having made the necessary arrangements, set off to fetch Mrs. Applegate, who was on the Neilgherries, but, alas ! never returned to enter on the work, to which they had both looked forward with so much hope and zeal. He was taken ill while on the hills, and died.

Again was the Mission destitute, and still did it remain without a pastor to feed the little flock, or an evangelist to gather more into the fold, till 1839, when the Rev. W. F. Rogers was stationed there, with Mr. Taylor, an European catechist, to assist him. He entered on his work with energy and ardour ; but before he could have made himself master even of the language, he was, to the grief of all, attacked with an illness, which has brought him back to England.

Surely the great Head of the Church must have intended to teach us some special lesson by these successive bereavements. Perhaps it may have been to show us that, although He generally honours His servants by making them His husbandmen, yet that He does not *need* their help ; for even here, where there has been so little human

culture, has He brought forth fruit, to His own glory.

He has graciously refreshed us with the sight of some of this, and may we not hope that He has also gathered some hidden ones to Himself, of whom we shall know nothing till that day, when He shall "come to be glorified in His saints, and admired in all them that believe."

But before I mention any particular instances of this kind, I shall give you a slight sketch of Mr. Barenbruck's labours in this station. When he was first appointed, he had great difficulty in completing the purchase of a piece of ground for the Mission premises. At last he succeeded, and before the end of 1825, the house was built, and he was settled in it with his family. Here he was encouraged and cheered by a visit he received from Bishop Heber, a few days only before that prelate's lamented death; and here, as I have told you, he laboured with zeal and energy in his Master's service for nearly five years.

He had, besides John Dewasagayam (who was then his head catechist, and is now an ordained clergyman), Cornelius, Stephen, Dewaperasadam, Sinappen, and three or four others as catechists, in the town or neighbouring villages, over all of whom he exercised a watchful care. There were thirty schools connected with the Mission, containing from

1,500 to 1,600 scholars, a few of whom were the children of native Christians ; but the rest were heathen, chiefly Soodras, with some Bramins.

By degrees the number of communicants amounted to twenty-four, and he had between twenty and thirty boys in the seminary within the compound. He spoke of these youths as being all of them blameless in their conduct, and he hoped that a few of them were under the teaching of the Holy Spirit. The elder ones he trained to future usefulness, by sending them out occasionally to distribute tracts, and to hold conversations with the people round.

For a little while the Rev. P. P. Schaffter was associated with him in his work ; and in their rides, in their walks, or sitting in their houses, as well as in their stated ministrations, they abundantly scattered the seeds of Divine Truth. At one time, riding along the bed of the Câvery, and seeing a Bramin performing poojah* by the side of a little pool he had dug to preserve some of the sacred water during the dry season, they stopped and endeavoured to lead him to seek the Water of Life. At other times they received visits from some of the learned heathen, and spoke to them the words of eternal salvation, while a day seldom passed without some of the people, in their way to their daily

* Worship.

ablutions in the Câvery, turning in to the little chapel, and listening attentively to the morning worship. Very frequently too did the day-school, which was near the Bramins' street, receive visits from some of the inhabitants, curious to know what instruction the children were receiving ; and several of these occasional listeners afterwards received the truths of Christianity, and were baptized.

Mr. Barenbruck and his catechists made also frequent excursions into the neighbourhood, either to visit some Christian family, or to examine the schools, or to take the opportunity of some feast or some ceremony to declare the Gospel to the people assembled there.

Sometimes it was a fire-feast, where a multitude would be collected on a large plain, with the idol on a chariot surrounded by armed men, to witness the devotees, who, having for the seventeen previous days, submitted to abstinence and various ceremonies, now repaired to the appointed spot crowned with flowers, their bodies covered with cow-dung, and marked with yellow stripes, to astonish the credulous spectators by walking over hot ashes and burning charcoal, spread upon the ground, sometimes to the extent of forty feet !

Sometimes they would attend the heartless scene of a heathen funeral, where every natural emotion was restrained, lest the soul of the departed

friend should be injured by the grief of the survivors!

But the most favourable opportunities were at the drawing of the Idol Cars. There is scarcely a large village in this part of the country, in which this ceremony does not take place, once or twice in the year; and the number of those who attend, is in proportion to the supposed sanctity of the place. There is a feast of this kind held at Combaconum, once only in twelve years, and at its last celebration, not less than the scarcely credible number of *fifty-seven thousand* men were employed in dragging the various cars, (that of Vishnoo alone requiring twelve thousand,) while a still greater number of men, women, and children, were assembled as spectators.

The concourse at the Mayaveram festivals is not so large as this; but as the chief pagoda is held in great repute, it is an immense multitude that is collected even here; and I have often been surprised to hear of the hundreds, and even thousands, that would gather round the Missionaries, and of the attention with which they have listened to them. It is quite touching to hear of the number of hands stretched out for tracts or books, and of the eager or rather impetuous demand for them; some repeating aloud passages they had learnt by heart, from those they already had—some begging for portions.

of Scripture, because they were larger than the tracts.

And though most of this at present appears to be like seed fallen on the way-side, we know who has declared that His word shall not return unto Him void ; it belongs to us to sow, and rests with Him to bring forth the fruit ; and who shall say how far His providence may waft the smallest seed, or in what distant place it may yet spring up, and yield an hundredfold ?

Mr. Barenbruck was much esteemed and respected, even by the heathen ; and on one occasion was invited to the celebration of several marriages, for the express purpose of the union receiving a blessing from him. He could not, however, persuade them to send their daughters to school ; and though Mrs. Winckler was afterwards able to do something towards female education, it has not succeeded at Mayaveram, in the same degree as at some other places.

But Mrs. Barenbruck was very active among the women ; and several of those connected with the Mission, gave evidence of having received the truth as it is in Jesus. Besides the wife of Dewaperasadam, Johanna, and Christina, the wife and mother of Stephen, and two or three others, whose names I do not know, there was also one, whom I must particularly notice,—Gnanamuttoo,

the first wife of the Rev. John Dewasagayam. Not only earnest to serve the Lord herself, but to lead others to know Him also, she was unwearied in her visits to the women near her, exhorting them, reading to them, or praying with them, as occasion might require. Her health however declined, and she was taken to Tranquebar, her native place, where her illness did not prevent her from still endeavouring to promote the spiritual benefit of others. As long as her strength permitted it, she would read to those friends who visited her, whether Christian or heathen, passages from the Bible, or sometimes parts of Pilgrim's Progress, or some other favourite human writer—never failing to press upon them the importance of the subject. She did not long survive, but died in peace, leaving her husband greatly comforted under his affliction, by the testimony she gave of entire and calm reliance on her Saviour, and on Him alone.

Thus fair and full of promise was the Mission at Mayaveram in 1830; but God hid his face, and we were troubled. The bursting of a blood-vessel obliged Mr. Barenbruck to retire first to the sea coast at Negapatam, then to the Neilgherries, and at last to Germany.

He did not forget his beloved flock even there, but during the remainder of his life kept up an

affectionate correspondence with them through the catechists ; while they, in their turn, still speak of him with gratitude and love, and the pretty arbour he planted in the garden, is, to this day, called by them, "Mr. Barenbruck's meditation place."

Low as this Mission has been brought, it yet exists ; though "cast down," it is "not destroyed ;" and if the Holy Spirit is pleased to move the hearts of the few who remain there of his faithful servants to cry, in the words of the eightieth Psalm, (the whole of which is so applicable to their state,) "Turn us again, O Lord God of Hosts, cause Thy face to shine, and we shall be saved ;" we must not doubt but that their prayer will be heard and answered.*

Mr. Barenbruck's successors, Mr. Winckler, Mr. Schmid, and Mr. Rogers, during the short time they were permitted to labour there, pursued the same course as he had done ; but I have dwelt almost exclusively on Mr. Barenbruck, partly because he was there so much longer than they were, and partly because, as he is gone to his rest and his works do follow him, I thought it a good opportunity of giving you a specimen of the life and usefulness of a devoted Missionary.

* Mayaveram is now in the charge of a German Missionary, who is industriously cultivating this interesting field.

Before I conclude this letter, I will relate a little anecdote, which, though it occurred at Tranquebar, yet, as it was connected with Mr. Barenbruck, will not be quite out of place. Mr. Barenbruck had sent an old man, a school assistant of the name of Sandappen, to a distant village to visit some newly-baptized converts. While there he was taken ill, and being persuaded that he should not recover, he was very anxious to return home. But this was no easy matter, he was become so weak as to be unable to walk, and no conveyance could be procured. In this difficulty, the people determined to carry him back on their shoulders, and set out accordingly ; but the heavy rains that were falling, and the helpless state of Sandappen, made the journey so fatiguing, that when they had proceeded some way they became quite exhausted. They made another attempt to procure some conveyance for him, but finding that this would occasion loss of time, they again took up the old man, and in five days completed their fatiguing journey. The distance was not less than thirty-five miles, and the skin of their shoulders was rubbed off by the weight.

Finding that he was likely to live but a short time, and that they should never see him again, they took leave of him with tears, saying, "Alas ! we have now no schoolmaster to come and teach us

the Word of God." The poor old man died in peace a few days after.

In my next I will return to Mayaveram, and in the meantime,

Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR LUCY,

AFTER the departure of Mr. Barenbruck from Mayaveram, as related in my last letter, the Mission was placed under the care of the head catechist, John Dewasagayam, but did not continue long under his superintendence, for having received ordination from Bishop Turner,* he was soon after appointed to a station in Tinnevely. When Mr. Winckler's return to Europe again left it desolate, it was given into the charge of Cornelius and six or seven other catechists, and was thus situated when visited by Mr. Tucker, in 1834.

As it was considered that some of these catechists would be employed to more advantage in other stations, it was, in the following year, arranged that only Dewaperasadam and two or three others should remain at Mayaveram to keep the Mission together till more effectual help could be found, and that while Sinappen and another should go to Tinnevely, Cornelius and Stephen should remove to Madras.

* The Rev. John Dewasagayam is the first native clergyman of the Church of England in South India.

Sinappen has since died in the faith, but a son of his is among those of whom I told you as living at the Church Mission Institution, and receiving education at the Grammar-school ; and I see his name among those to whom prizes were awarded at the last half-yearly examination.

Cornelius is still at Madras, going on steadily and faithfully, two of his sons are at the Grammar-school, and one of them also obtained one of the last prizes.

Stephen was taken ill before he could leave Mayaveram, and finding himself getting worse, begged to be removed for change of air to Combaconum. Here he was most kindly received and attended to by Mr. Nimmo, of the London Missionary Society, but no human care or skill could avail, and he died in a few weeks. Mr. Nimmo bears the following testimony to him in a letter to Mr. Tucker, in which, after mentioning the circumstances of his illness and death, he says, "I cannot conclude this without thankfully adding that he did, indeed, end his course most happily. During his stay here, I and my catechists, saw much of him, and were edified by his pious and heavenly conversation. He was full of the Scriptures, and applied them to his own case in a very appropriate manner. There was not the slightest symptom of fear about him, and he appeared divested of all

worldly cares. He told his wife, 'Weep not for me,' and when his aunt told him that his son was weeping, he simply said, 'The Lord will provide for him.' Though sensible to the last, he was, through extreme weakness, incapable of saying much. Thus ended the life of one of the humblest servants of our Lord."

I shall, however, avail myself of a little account drawn up by the Rev. John Dewasagayam, to give you more particulars of Stephen's life, in which we may trace the work of Divine grace more in detail than we often have the opportunity of doing.

His parents were high-caste natives of Tranquebar, but probably died when he was young, as he was brought up by his aunt, a bigoted heathen. By her means he received a good native education in a heathen school, where, doubtless, he had made many an offering of rice and flowers to Ganesa.

Being intimate with the master of one of our schools in Tranquebar, he frequently visited it, and was observed to be particularly attentive whenever the Holy Scriptures was explained to the children.

He was afterwards employed to assist in another school; and when Mr. Barenbruck removed to Mayaveram, he gladly accepted his proposal to accompany him.

At this time he was married, but had no family; and his aunt, who was very anxious on the subject,

made many vows and offerings to their idols to procure the wished-for blessing ; but these proving fruitless, she consulted Samuel, an aged native catechist at Tranquebar (who had formerly been a pupil of Schwartz's), who advised her to apply to the God of the Christians, praying himself with her to this effect. About the same time it would seem that Stephen himself made a vow, that if God would send him a child, he would give himself to Him as the true God.

It pleased God to hear these prayers, and to grant them the desire of their hearts, and this adds another to those instances of which we frequently hear in South India, in which God appears to deal with His infant Church there, as He did with Israel of old, removing the doubts of the sincere inquirer, and strengthening the faith of the weak believer by some visible sign. But though Stephen's heart was touched, his aunt's was, as yet, unmoved by this instance of God's goodness.

Old Samuel did not live to see the answer to his prayer—he died before the birth of the child, full of joy in the anticipation of seeing that Saviour whom he had long served, and whom he felt to be near him even in the valley of the shadow of death.

But the rest of Stephen's history I will give you in the Rev. John Derasagayam's own words :—

“When we were at Mayaveram, Stephen dis-

covered more boldness and pleasure in reading and speaking from our Scripture to the heathen around. Mr. Barenbruck and myself had a good opinion of him, and we spoke to him frequently about public confession of his faith in Jesus. He did not make us any promise ; but I trust he greatly sought the strength of the Lord for it. Once I visited a sick man in his street, about nine o'clock in the night, and went unexpectedly to his house by, and was greatly pleased and surprised to see him instructing his wife, as also that she was able herself to read the Scripture. I asked him afterwards why he did not communicate to me such pleasing news long ago. He answered, that as it was his purpose to renounce heathenism publicly, he thought it his duty to prepare also the mind of his wife for it ; and we were happy to find she was sincerely desirous to follow her good husband. But his aunt appeared quite confused to hear of it afterwards. My late wife also had frequent conversations with them, and gave me pleasing accounts of the willingness of Stephen's wife to follow her husband ; but the old woman was restless. Stephen's relations at Tranquebar came to know of his resolution, and made a great stir about it. They wrote to him some passionate letters, and threatened to beat him cruelly if he came a Christian to Tranquebar. They persecuted his father-in-law, mother-in-law, and their children.

His father and mother-in-law came frequently to Mayaveram with great sorrow and weeping, and did all they could to discourage him. He was much distressed to see the great opposition, but did not suffer himself to be discouraged. The day of his baptism was fixed for Easter-day, April 19th, 1829. He came to the service about half an hour later than the appointed time, with his son. The reason was, that his aunt particularly concealed the little boy, as the father wanted to have him baptized at the same time. He was named Samuel, "asked of the Lord," 1 Sam. i. 20, and also in grateful remembrance of the old catechist, Samuel. It was a day of great sorrow and tears to the old woman; she left the house saying that he lost caste, and she was absent a few days, but the love she bore to her grandson brought her back. I remember her requesting her daughter-in-law with tears not to follow her husband, and so make the whole house polluted. But the Lord disposed the whole matter most mercifully and wonderfully; Stephen soon left the heathen street, and came to live within our compound. His wife improved the favourable opportunity. Before her baptism, she discovered also a great desire to have the Friday prayer-meeting for women kept at her house alternately, and Mr. Barenbruck had the great satisfaction to administer to her the blessed rite of

baptism, a day before he left India, from his sick bed.

“The old woman was present, but I observed her in tears. The next week I was surprised to see her coming to our church. Great was also my joy to see her very soon embracing Jesus as her only Saviour and comfort, and lead a truly Christian life. With my own eyes I observed with what delight she walked as an evangelical messenger from one house to another in the compound on the day of prayer, inviting them to attend at her house. I will only mention here one instance of the good old woman. After the Rev. Mr. Winckler's arrival at Mayaveram, he examined the candidates for baptism, who were under my instruction previously. The day of baptism was fixed, and the candidates appeared very desirous to have fine names chosen for them. The good old woman came to my wife as usual, when she asked her, ‘Atchy, have you chosen a name for yourself?’ She answered, ‘Magaley, daughter, why I ought to be called Eley pavy,’ (poor sinner). We then chose her present name, Christina. I need not say that Stephen was a man of prayer. This great privilege he exercised with peculiar blessing upon his own wife and aunt. I will only say, that I observed in him a truly Christian character, feeding daily on the word of

life, and communicating it to his fellow-sinners, with love, humility, and zeal as a Christian reader and catechist. His enraged relations, who saw in him a sincere professor of our religion, and who observed his patience in bearing their blasphemy and insults, left him sooner than we expected to his own way. I reflect on the interesting Christian conversations I had with him, especially in the morning hours ; from seven to eight, before morning prayers, I spent with him and with other Mission native labourers in reading to them from English religious publications. I knew he had made up his mind to labour hard and zealously too in the discharge of his duty as he ought. He continued to correspond with me after I left Mayaveram. Being fully aware of his speedy dissolution, he was desirous to see his Saviour face to face, and appeared well assured that his dear wife and mother, and his only son, will not be forsaken by his heavenly Father. He has, however, recommended them to my care, as myself and family have taken a particular interest in their welfare."

This little history, coming as it does from the pen of a long-tried and faithful servant of God, needs no confirmation from other sources ; but if it did, I might corroborate it by the testimony borne to Stephen's simplicity and Christian con-

sistency, by one of my own family. To my own mind it derives an additional interest from the manner in which it is related, and the incidental insight it gives into some of the details of missionary proceedings.

Long as this letter is, I cannot close it without giving you the following translation of some passages from one of Stephen's letters, written a few weeks before his death to the same faithful friend and counsellor.*

"I send you this letter from a very distressful sick bed. Agreeably to the arrangements which the Rev. Mr. Tucker has made about Mayaveram Mission, he requested Sir Montgomery, the sub-collector, who has kindly lent his aid to look after this Mission during the absence of a Missionary, to send Cornelius catechist, and myself to Madras. I was very desirous to go there, not only to do the service of the Lord, but hoped also to derive a great benefit to my son, Samuel Asirvadem, but the Lord appears willing to try and purify me.

* The writer has before her also an original note of Stephen's to Mr. Tucker, to thank him for some books he had sent him. It is written in English, and breathes a spirit of sincere gratitude for the spiritual privileges he enjoyed.

The Lord has visited me with his affectionate rod. I take very little food, and I have no strength. However, my Lord Jesus Christ strengthens my soul and body every day, and visits me kindly, and comforts me by His Spirit; assuring me that although I was a great and weak sinner, His righteousness and grace are sufficient for me. He tells me, as he told his disciples in the sea, 'It is I, be not afraid.' In my present happy state, my friends the catechists read to me, agreeably to my desire, the Sermons on the Passion of our Saviour, and pray with and for me. Death and life in my Lord Jesus are happy things to me. Sir M—— was so kind to write to Mr. Tucker about my being very ill. Mr. Tucker wrote me a comforting letter, stating that our Lord Jesus Christ is desirous to purify me more and more, and directing also Dewaperasadam, catechist, to assist me. It is thus also the Lord increases the peace of my soul and body, through His faithful servants. I don't inform you this for pride, but I consider it my filial duty to inform you with a broken heart, like Hannah." After speaking of Sir Henry Montgomery's and Mr. Nimmo's kindness to him, he adds, "I wrote to you some time ago a letter, in which I used several murmuring expressions, owing to my sufferings; I beg you to pardon them."

“ With my own, my mother, wife, and son’s best regards to you and your family,

“ I remain, your faithful servant.

“ STEPHEN.”*

Is not this a touching letter? and it is the more interesting, as being written from one native to another; for they naturally write more freely to their own people than to an European.

I will only add, that Stephen’s old aunt (or, as she is often called, his mother), is still at Mayaveram, and maintains her Christian character. She is partly indebted for her support to friends in England. His wife Johanna went for a little while to Palamcottah, where she engaged in teaching some of the children connected with the Mission. She afterwards came to Madras, and is employed in the Church Missionary Institution; while Samuel, the child of so many prayers, has a small native school at Madras. He is steady and well-conducted; and we trust the earnest prayers of his pious father will yet be fully answered.

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

* This translation is by the Rev. John Dewasagayam.

LETTER XV.

MY DEAR LUCY,

THE more I know of the Mission at Mayaveram, whether from published accounts, or from the information of private friends, the more do I find in it to excite the interest, and call forth the prayers, of the people of God ; so much is there on the one hand to dishearten and disappoint ; and on the other, so much cause is there for gratitude and encouragement. Often, when the hopes of the Missionary have been raised, by the willingness to listen, and the apparent interest shown by some of his hearers, has he been cast down by finding they were influenced by curiosity, or by the expectation of some temporal advantage. Frequently, too, has he been practically taught how far the intellect may be enlightened by human reasoning and instruction, while the heart remains untouched, because the Spirit of God has not breathed upon it.

Mr. Barenbruck mentions, among others, one

particularly interesting conversation, which he once had with three or four Bramins, who came to visit him from a distance; and though the account is too long to relate in detail, I must just give you the outline of it. They had by some means acquired a considerable knowledge of Scripture—they had a vague idea of the only way of salvation—speaking of some great High Priest, who was to make an atonement for sin—and they appeared sincerely desirous of being taught the whole truth. They even went so far as to visit all the heathen festivals within their reach, for the express purpose of endeavouring to draw the people away from their false deities, and to lead them to the one true God.

Hopeful, however, as all this seemed, their hearts were too much entangled with the “wisdom of the world,” fully to receive “Christ crucified;” they could not make up their minds to take the decisive step of receiving baptism; nor could Mr. Barenbruck prevail on them even to remove the badges of Síva or Víshnoo from their foreheads.

But indeed, in this Christian land, we can form but little idea of the sacrifice that must be made, nor of the degree of grace it requires for a high-caste man to be willing to be baptized. Not only is he despised, but entirely discarded by his relations; his former friends will not eat with him, nor

enter his house, nor take a cup of water from his hands ; while his wife, unless her mind has been also changed, is taken from him, and his children are taught to treat him with contempt. Can we then wonder that many stop short at this fiery trial of their faith ?

But though Mayaveram, like other stations, has much that is dark and gloomy, yet there is also in its history many a gleam of light that bids us look beyond the cloud, and to walk more by faith, and less by sight.

Visuvasanaden, instead of resuming the saffron robe, of which he was once so proud, and which told of the zeal that had carried his wearied feet in pilgrimage to Benares, has, we trust, put on the Lord Jesus Christ. Only one instance has occurred, of any convert returning to heathenism ; and children who were removed by their parents from our schools, because they sometimes in their sleep repeated the sacred truths they had imbibed during the day, were, at their own earnest entreaty, allowed to return, and drink still deeper of the fountain of heavenly wisdom. The examinations of the different schools were also often very satisfactory, particularly of one, of whose master I will give you a little account, and then close my history of Mayaveram.

•

Chedumbrum was a high-caste man, of the village of Valangaman, superstitiously attached to the forms of his religion, till having become in some way connected with the Mission, he was gradually led to search into the truths so continually brought before him. On account of the great want there has been of Christian teachers, it has sometimes been found necessary to place the *heathen* children who are desirous of instruction, under the care of heathen masters of respectable character, provision being made that nothing but the Bible, and other Christian books, should be read in the school.

It was in this way, that in 1831, just before his departure for Tinnevely, the Rev. John Dewasagayam appointed Chedumbrum to the charge of the school at Valangaman, where the interest evidently excited in his mind by the truths it was his office to teach, led Dewaperasadam and the other catechists, to hope that a work of grace was commencing in his heart. They observed, that by degrees he began to leave off some of his heathen customs, the ashes no longer appeared on his forehead, he was seldom to be seen at an idolatrous festival, and seemed to attach no spiritual value to the waters of the Câvery.

His relations became uneasy, but nothing occurred

to confirm their suspicions, till one day, when he told his wife to fetch the rice as usual for his breakfast ; she refused, reminding him that it was the day of a particular fast. He then asked his aunt to get it for him, but she became very angry, and left the house, to which she could never be persuaded to return. This did not, however, move him from his purpose, and fetching the rice himself, he ate it, to the surprise and consternation of his whole family.

The opposition he in consequence experienced from them, led him to search more diligently into the Scriptures ; and, encouraged and assisted by his friend Dewaperasadam, he, by degrees, ventured to read and explain the Bible to his heathen neighbours and relations, and to have family prayer in his own house. He had been from the first, active and diligent in his office of schoolmaster, but now he entered on his work with higher motives, and a nobler aim. Anxious to impart to the children the knowledge of salvation, he, of his own accord, opened and closed the day with prayer, and on Sundays would collect the children together, and in the absence of other means of grace, would read to them the service of our Church, and instruct them in the word of God. Strange as it may seem, this zeal gave no offence to the heathen parents ; on

the contrary, the school increased so much, that the private schools in the place were gradually given up.

But all this time, Chedumbrum continued unbaptized ; his Christian friends often spoke to him on the subject, but the difficulties he knew it would occasion in his family, induced him to delay it. For two years he continued thus, doubtless not without many internal struggles, till in 1839, he was taken ill, and was again earnestly entreated by Visuvasanaden, the assistant catechist, who happened to be visiting the schools at Valangaman, and the neighbourhood, no longer to defer it.

Chedumbrum assured his friend of the anxiety he had long felt upon the subject, and as there was no Missionary at Mayaveram, and he was too ill to be removed, begged of him to go to Combaconum, to request the Rev. Mr. Coombes, of the Society for Propagating the Gospel, to come over and baptize him. Unhappily, Mr. Coombes was away from home, and all that Visuvasanaden could do for him, was to exhort him earnestly to confide in the precious blood of Christ, and in that alone. He then prayed with him, and returned to Mayaveram.

After this, Chedumbrum got better, and in a few days thought himself well enough to resume his labours at the school. But he seems to have had a

presentiment of his approaching death ; for, on the very first day that he did so, instead of returning home to supper at the usual time, he went from house to house, to make peace with those friends whom his religious sentiments had alienated from him.

After supper, he felt a return of his former complaint, and being persuaded that his end was approaching, he immediately assembled his family for prayer ; and telling his wife how deeply he repented of having yielded to her in delaying to be baptized, entreated her to embrace the truth without delay. He then prevailed on her, and the other friends who had gathered round him, to promise that his remains should be *buried*, and not burned. His wife then asked him if he had any other advice to give, to which he answered, " Trust in the Lord, He will bless and keep you," and in a few minutes breathed his last.

When we consider how long this Station has been without a Missionary ; and how rarely, for several years, it has been blessed with the means of grace, surely this little history gives us cause to hope that many may be found in the great day, of whom the Church knows but little, but whom the Lord has secretly nourished by His Holy Spirit, and brought to His rest with very scanty means ;

hiding from His servants the fruit of their labours, till they shall be able to rejoice in it, without danger to their own souls.

Dewaperasadam, writing of Chedumbrum, says, " We have indeed lost an active, diligent, and faithful labourer. He was not added to the Church of Christ through baptism, but we can safely say he lived and died a Christian. May the Lord console his poor and distressed family, and bring them soon to the knowledge of His Son Jesus Christ."

But it is time that I laid aside my pen for the present, though I hope I may be able before long to give you a little sketch of Missionary work in Tinnevelly and on the coast of Malabar, including some particulars of the Native Female Schools. And, praised be God, both these Missions present a very different picture from those of Madras and Mayaveram. They have been permitted to enjoy a constant succession of Missionaries, whose labours have been blessed with a large and increasing harvest.

I will not, however, anticipate. I will only, before I conclude, beg of you to take a map of India, and, marking the stations occupied by our Church, whether in connexion with the Church Missionary Society or the Society for Propagating

the Gospel, compare them with the immense and thickly-peopled tracts of country into which we have not even attempted to diffuse the light of salvation.

O! that England might be awakened to a sense of her privileges and her responsibility, in thus having, as it were, committed to her charge, not less than 140 millions of immortal souls; and that our own beloved Church would arise and shine, and carry out the pure light of life to our Gentile fellow-subjects, who are still sitting in darkness and the shadow of death.

But, my dear Lucy, let us not forget that the nation and the Church are composed of *individuals*, and that both you and I are among the number of those to whom this blessed work is, in different degrees, entrusted. What, then, have *we* done, and what can we do, towards this glorious object? Let us remember that however small our influence may be, or however limited our means, yet, if with earnest prayer and persevering, self-denying effort, we make use of even one talent in our Master's service, we know not how far He may be pleased to bless the exertions of the youngest or the meanest of His servants. One thing we know assuredly—that He will not forget *any* work of faith, or labour of love, or patience of hope, which

we have endured for His name's sake. "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand : for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that, or whether they both shall be alike good." *

Adieu, dear Lucy,

Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

* Eccles. xi. 6.

**SOUTH INDIAN
MISSIONARY SKETCHES;**

**CONTAINING
A SHORT ACCOUNT
OF THE
MISSIONARY STATIONS,
CONNECTED WITH THE
CHURCH MISSIONARY SOCIETY IN SOUTHERN INDIA,
IN LETTERS TO A YOUNG FRIEND.**

By S. T.

**PART II.
TINNEVELLY, TRAVANCORE, ETC.**



NATIVE LETTER.
**THE PROFITS WILL BE APPROPRIATED TO NATIVE
FEMALE EDUCATION.**

**L O N D O N :
JAMES NISBET AND CO., 21, BERNERS STREET.
MDCCCLXIII.**

P R E F A C E.

THE writer of the South Indian Sketches begs to apologize to her friends for the time that has elapsed between the publication of the first and second parts. But she can scarcely regret the delay, as it has given time for nearly the whole of the present portion to pass under the eye of one who has the best means of judging of its correctness, and from whom so much of her previous information was received.

She cannot omit this opportunity of expressing her gratitude to those friends, whose kindness procured so extended a circulation of the former part, and she now sends forth the remainder with the hope and prayer, that He who accepts, "according to what a man hath, and not according to what he hath not," will again vouchsafe His blessing.

Southborough, June, 1843.



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SOUTH INDIAN

MISSIONARY SKETCHES.

LETTER I.

At length, my dear Lucy, I will invite you to resume with me our long suspended journey, and getting again into our Palanquins with our "bearers," "Massalchee," and "Câvady coolie" as before, we will leave the pleasant station of Mayaveram and proceed towards the still distant province of *Tinnevelly*.

We are now in *Tanjore*, and the Delta, through which we are passing, is the most fertile part of the province. It is a flat plain, abundantly watered by the Câvery and its numerous branches, and yielding the most luxuriant crops of rice. No human habitation is to be discerned amid "the waving sea of green" around us, for the little villages lie hidden, each in the embosoming shade of its friendly tope,

and only a heavy goprum occasionally lifts its head still to remind us we are in a heathen land.*

The natural advantages of the Delta of Tanjore have been very greatly improved by the art and industry of its inhabitants.† *Annicuts*‡ have, in several cases, been built across the rivers to prevent their pouring down their torrents in fruitless waste into the sea; embankments riveted with stone, and *two thousand miles* in length, confine the various streams within their proper limits, and the artificial channels that convey the water to the paddy grounds have been calculated as measuring not less than *twenty thousand miles*. All these works show a skill and labour the more remarkable as they must have been carried on in the midst of continued wars, and when the plundering incursions of the Mahrattas must have made the expected harvests very insecure.

If you, my dear Lucy, know as little of the internal state of India as I have done till lately, you will have the same confused and incorrect idea of an Indian

* The Rev. J. Tucker has often spoken of the comparative dreariness of the views, arising from the want of village spires and steeples.

† The fertility of the Delta may be judged of from the fact, that though not quite twice as large as the county of Kent, it contains a million of inhabitants who pay without difficulty an annual revenue to government of five lacs of rupees (£50,000) which, according to the relative value of grain, would in England be equal to £300,000.

‡ A kind of dam.

village as I used to have, and will take it for granted that it is much like our own ; with a population more or less fluctuating, and subject to no other authority than the general laws of the land, or the peculiar regulations of the district in which it is situated.

But the villages in India are very different in these respects from ours. They are all little separate " republics, having everything they can want within themselves, and almost independent of any foreign relation. They seem to last where nothing else lasts. Dynasty after dynasty tumbles down ; revolution succeeds to revolution ; Hindoo, Patan, Mogul, Mahratta, Sik, English, are all masters in turn ; but the village community remains the same. In times of trouble they arm and fortify themselves ; an hostile army passes through the country ; the village communities collect their cattle within their walls, and let the enemy pass unprovoked. If plunder and devastation be directed against themselves, and the force employed be irresistible, they flee to friendly villages at a distance ; but when the storm has passed over, they return and resume their occupations. If a country remains for a series of years the scene of continued pillage and massacre, so that the villages cannot be inhabited, the scattered villagers, nevertheless, return when the power of peaceable possession revives. A generation may pass away, but the suc-

ceeding generation will return. The sons will take the places of their fathers ; the same site for the village, the same position for the houses, the same lands will be re-occupied by the descendants of those who were driven out when the village was depopulated ; and it is not a trifling matter that will drive them out, for they will often maintain their post through times of disturbance and convulsion, and acquire strength sufficient to resist pillage and oppression with success. This union of the village communities, each one forming a separate little state in itself, has, I conceive, contributed more than any other cause to the preservation of the people of India, through all the revolutions and changes which they have suffered, and is in a high degree conducive to their happiness and to the enjoyment of a great portion of freedom and independence." *

The boundaries of their lands are accurately defined and jealously guarded under the superintendence of the *headman*, who is the chief person in each village, and whose business it is to make arrangements with the government for the revenue—to apportion the payment of it among the villagers—to let such lands as have no fixed tenants—to settle disputes or refer them to higher authorities,—and, in short, to per-

* See Elphinstone's India, vol. i. ; and the quotation from Sir C. T. Metcalfe, in Report of Select Committee of House of Commons, 1832.

form all the duties of a municipal governor. The office is hereditary, and he is the representative of the head of the first family who settled in the village. Sometimes there are several headmen, arising probably from more than one family having originally settled in it. The headman is assisted by different officers—the accountant—the watchman—the money-changer—the priest—the astrologer (who is sometimes the schoolmaster)—the smith—carpenter—barber—potter—minstrel, &c., &c., all of whom are part of the regular village establishment, and are supported by the community. They have existed (and apparently unaltered) since the time of Menu.*

There is in all the public works and institutions of India, a character of *largeness*, whether in *number*, *size*, or *durability*, to which we have no parallel in our smaller and comparatively modern countries; and one might almost fancy that the height of the mountains, the vastness of the forests, and the grandeur of the general scenery had, in times past, communicated their influence to the native mind.

Every village has its tanks, smaller or larger according to circumstances, but always sufficient to contain an ample supply of water for general use; and you may judge of the scale on which these works are sometimes carried on, when I tell you that in the collectorate of South Arcot, a considerable extent of

* Part 1. Letter III.

country is watered by the tank, or rather artificial lake of Veeranum, *twenty-five miles* in circumference, into which the waters of the Coleroon are conducted.

England, too, might blush to compare the mis-directed zeal of these poor idolaters with her own lukewarmness in the service of her God ; for no village, however small, is without at least one Swâmy house, while the larger villages have several of these inferior temples, besides generally two or three pagodas.

In all the idol temples in Southern India, there is one small dark room of a nearly cubical form, at the farthest end of which the idol is placed ; and opposite to it is a low door at which the worshipper presents his offerings. Some of the "*Swâmy houses*," (or small temples) consist of merely this room ; others have two or three additional rooms in front of it ; but in the larger temples, called by us "*Pagodas*," this shrine is surrounded by halls, and colonades, and courts, all enclosed by walls, and sometimes covering a large extent of ground. The pagoda at Seringham, near Trichinopoly, so well known in the early history of Lord Clive, has seven different enclosures, each surrounded by a wall, having four gates with a gopurum (or high tower) in the middle of each side, opposite to the four cardinal points. The outer wall, twenty-five feet in

height, is built of stones, thirty-two feet in length, and runs round a circuit of four miles.

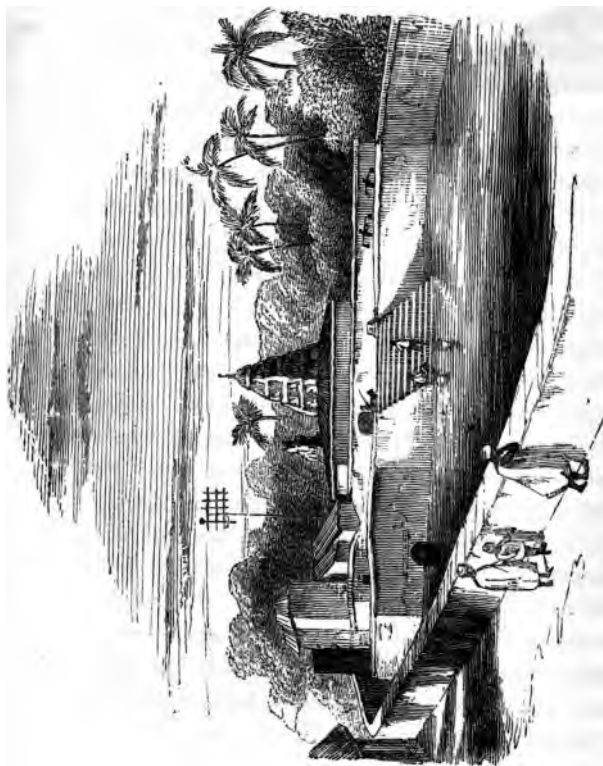
The pagodas at Conjeveràm are magnificent specimens of art—the roof of the hall in that at Little Conjeveràm is supported by a hundred pillars, and that at Great Conjeveràm by a *thousand*. Some of these columns are plain; but most of them are richly carved in bas relief, with figures of different gods, or groups of animals and human beings. Some of the pillars are cut into the shape of vases and adorned with chains or wreaths of flowers, beautifully wrought, and hanging gracefully and freely separate from the column, though carved from the same block.

The "*Goprums*" are peculiar to Southern India, at least in their form—they are tall oblong pyramids, composed of stages or steps ascending from each of the four sides, till they end in a high narrow ridge. The sides of these steps are often elaborately carved, and the ridge is decorated with ornaments like the crockets of Gothic architecture; and the height and solidity of the whole structure often give it an imposing appearance. These Goprums are built over gateways, sometimes only at the outer entrance, sometimes (as at Seringham) between the inner courts. At the famous pagoda at Chillumbrun there are two in one of the inner courts that stand detached from the rest of the buildings; and it is a

remarkable circumstance (occurring I believe only there) that the *unoccupied space* between the two is considered as the most sacred part of the whole temple, far more so even than the shrine. It seems to be a lingering ray of the long lost truth that "God is a Spirit."

The walls of a pagoda contain many other buildings besides those for ornament or for worship. The dwellings of the officiating Bramins—*Choultries*, sometimes very handsome, for the accommodation of pilgrims and devotees—*Mandarums*, or open buildings, in which the idol rests during its occasional progresses round the temple; are all to be found there; besides a large tank, on which some of their religious ceremonies are performed.

A curious appendage to some of the pagodas is a tall stone pillar, erected near the most sacred spot, with a square ornament suspended on it, almost like an English harrow, with little bells (not used) hung in the compartments; it is always so placed as to face the shrine. I have never met with any one who could explain its meaning, but you will see a representation of it in the accompanying plate, which also shows the form of the goprum, the tank, and the general appearance of a pagoda.



PERSEWAUKUM PAGODA, MADRAS.

' We have been wandering among the pagodas till we have almost forgotten our journey, and we must hasten on to Tanjore itself, the capital of the province.

As you approach the town your memory will turn to one whose name has been associated with your earliest feelings of interest in missionary labours, and it will be a pleasant thought that you are now witnessing the scenes and passing over the very ground so often traversed by the revered Schwartz. Nothing now exists to tell us where he lived or died; his grave alone remains; but as we view the black marble bull, or visit the pagoda whose spacious precincts with their solemn quietness, painfully remind us of our own cathedrals, we shall not fail to think how often his spirit must have been stirred by scenes like these.

The present line of Rajahs of Tanjore are of Mahratta origin; in 1685, the then reigning sovereign invited the Mahrattas to assist him against the power of Trichinopoly. Sevagi, the famous Mahratta chief, sent his brother Eccogi on this service, who, as usual in Eastern history, dethroned the sovereign he was sent to protect, and possessed himself of the kingdom.

The wars among the native princes in the last century, in which we were called to interfere, considerably lessened the power of Tanjore, and it afterwards became tributary to our Indian government.

Still, as in the time of Schwartz, the Rajah retained a degree of independence, but late events have made further measures necessary ; and his power is now confined to his own fort and a small territory, perhaps half a mile around.

The only state on this coast that has preserved its independence, is the *Tondiman country*, a little principality lying to the south of Tanjore, and governed by its own Rajah, who is descended from the ancient *Polygar* chiefs, that bold and fearless race so often spoken of in Indian history. The spirit of their ancestors is not yet extinct among these rulers, for even the nominal annual tribute of an elephant proved so galling to the late Rajah, that it has been remitted within the last few years. This Prince was a very amiable man, and so beloved by his people, that when riding into the country, a friend of ours has often seen the villagers, of their own accord, run before him to clear the road of stones or any obstacle that might make his poney stumble. He was very fond of European society, and spoke and wrote English remarkably well ; his manners were very gentlemanly, and there was a *tact* in his intercourse with the English that was very striking, when the difference of manners, customs, and habits of feeling was considered.

He lived and died a heathen. How true it is, that the " natural man," however intelligent and amiable,

“discerneth not the things of the Spirit !” And yet he must have known something about Christianity ; for one day the lady to whom I have just alluded was present at an interview between him and a French Jesuit priest, when after a few remarks on unimportant subjects, he suddenly turned to the priest and said, “What is the difference between your religion and this gentleman’s ?” (alluding to an English gentleman also present) “*you* worship images as we do, *he* does not ; how is this ?” What stumbling blocks does Popery throw in the way of real Christianity !

His son, the present Tondiman Rajah, is very young, not more than thirteen years old, but like his father, is amiable, intelligent, and very fond of the English. May the affectionate kindness he has received from his English friends, and which has so drawn his heart towards them, be made the means of winning it also to that religion from which the kindly feeling sprung.

Our next halt will be at Trichinopoly. For the present adieu.

Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER II.

MY DEAR LUCY,

HAD we taken the shorter, but less convenient, road from Mayaveram, and passed through Triviar, instead of Tanjore, we should have met with the Cavery again, just before we reached Trichinopoly ; and if our journey were in the spring, our bearers would find no difficulty in carrying us over ; for, from February to June the bed of the river is sand from bank to bank, except a narrow stream running along the middle.

But later in the year its full impetuous waters must be crossed in a very different way. You have heard of the basket boats mentioned by Herodotus, and still used on the Euphrates ; but probably never thought of getting into one yourself. You must however venture,—they are circular baskets, from nine to fourteen feet in diameter, made of bamboo, and covered with buffalo leather. Your palanquin, with yourself in it, will be put into one of these, with the poles of the palanquin resting on the edges of the boat ; your fourteen attendants, with two men to

manage the little vessel, will get in beside you, and you will scarcely feel alarmed, even though the swiftness of the stream should give you a few sudden whirls before you reach the opposite bank.*

The rapidity of the river, when full, is too great to allow of any other boats being used with safety ; and all the iron ore which, as I formerly told you, is brought down the river from Salem to Porto Novo, is thus conveyed. When the men arrive at the end of their voyage, they take their boats to pieces, just as we are told they did in days of old, burn the frames, and carry the leather back with them to be ready for their next expedition.

As Trichinopoly comes in sight, and your eye rests on its strong and extensive fort, built on a commanding rock, the names of Clive and Lawrence will scarcely fail to cross your mind, and while you thankfully acknowledge the good hand of God, without which the valour of our troops could have been of no avail, a deeper joy and gratitude will rise with the thought that these fair scenes are no longer defiled

* In some of the less frequented roads, the short lived torrents that so suddenly appear and disappear, are crossed in a still more simple manner. The natives make a smaller and larger hoop of bamboo, between the two they fasten the necks of several of their common earthen chatties, and covering all with a kind of wicker platform, place the traveller and his palanquin upon it, and swimming by his side convey the fragile bark across in safety.

with war and bloodshed, but are enjoying the blessings of peace and liberty, under British government.

I cannot pass by this fort and its English church, without alluding to the melancholy fate of the Nawab of Kurnool, so lately murdered within its walls ; and though it will be rather a digression from my more immediate subject, the whole story is so remarkable, that I will relate it to you.

Before I begin, I must remind you that not only is there a mixture of Hindoo and Mohammedan *population* in the territories under British sway in India, but that there still exist a considerable number of both Hindoo and Mohammedan *governments*. The *Hindoo* sovereigns, generally called "*Rajahs*,"* have always been independent of each other ; but the rulers of the smaller *Mohammedan* states, called "*Nawabhs*,"† (or Nabobs), were dependent on the vice-roys of provinces, and, through them, on the government of the Great Mogul at Delhi. Those in the Dekkan were subject to the vice-roy of Hyderabad, (now called the "*Nizam*,")‡ and though, since the Mogul empire has passed away, his power has

* Also the *Maha Rajah*, (Great Prince), of the Punjaub, the *Rana* of Odeypoor and other places, the *Rao* of Cutch, &c.

† Other titles are in use among the Mohammedans—e.g. *Padshah* of Oude,—the *Ameers* of Sind,—the *Khans* of Buhawulpoor, &c.

‡ Nizam means administrator or governor.

been greatly lessened, he still retains a degree of influence among these Mohammedan states, even those that are tributary to, or in alliance with Great Britain.

The present Nizam is one of our allies, and his prime minister, a very clever intelligent Brahmin, has always been decided and unvarying in his attachment to the English; but the Nizam's brother is an ambitious intriguing man, and has several times been detected in plotting against us, and has in consequence been banished to some distance from Hyderabad.

There are never wanting among the Mohammedans bigoted zealots, who, under the strong influence of an intolerant and domineering creed, are ever ready to seize any favourable opportunity of exciting the hostile feelings of their fellow believers; and the remarkable rapid secret communication that is constantly carried on among the natives* affords an unusual facility for plots and conspiracies against the existing state of things.

You know how fond the Mohammedans all over the world are of amulets, or charms; these generally

* Public news is often known through this channel, or by a "Bazaar report," as it is called, several days before any regular information is received; and it will be remembered that our disasters in Cabool, in January, 1842, were first heard of in this way.

contain only the name of God,* or some passage from the Korân ; but they are at times made use of to convey some hidden meaning, and to arouse a spirit of fanaticism against either the idolatrous Hindoos† or the “ infidel Feringees,” as they call the English.

Numbers of these exciting amulets were discovered and sent in to Government from all parts of South India, in the year 1838, when our troops were first marched towards Affghanistan, and when it would seem there was a general secret stir among the Mohammedan part of our Indian population. Arab spies or delegates were sent from the North West provinces, to excite, it is believed, a general insurrection ; and had not the Providence of God watched over the dark and unseen danger, our Indian empire might have been placed in jeopardy, or at the very least, the lives of many Europeans would have been sacrificed in the general massacre which appeared to have been planned.

Some of these delegates were seized near Madras,

* The writer has by her a number of little pieces of paper, each ruled in nine small squares, and each square containing the words, “ Ah Allah,” (O God) in the Malay character. They were found enclosed in a small ball of green gram, mixed with some glutinous substance, which was picked up on the beach at Madras, and were doubtless charms thrown overboard by Mohammedans from some native vessel.

† See note A at the end of the volume.

and the following is a translated copy of one of the real or pretended amulets found upon them. It is artfully worded ; for most of it is from the Korân, and, at first sight, would appear to be intended merely for a religious purpose, but the fourth and fifth lines plainly show that the object was to rouse the Moslems to the duty of "*Juhad*," or war against the infidels. You must read it from right to left :—

from evil.	and our people	deliver us	Gracious	God !	O !
in fortified walls.	any except those	He will not destroy	the righteous	will reward	God
us thy servants.	to aid and succour	thy prophet	send	God !	O !
our Prophet.	Thou,	these tyrants,	cities	from these	Drive out
our God !	O Thou,	Destroy them,	and the heretics.	the infidels	Fight against

It was just about this time, and while the success of our arms in Affghanistan still hung doubtfully in the balance,* that a poor woman, travelling alone, was seized with cholera at a choultry near Hydrabad, and finding her end approaching, she begged to speak

* In the spring of 1839.

privately to a respectable looking native, a stranger, who happened to be resting there also. Taking from her neck an amulet, she gave it to him, solemnly charging him to throw it into the river as soon as she was dead. The man took it with the intention of fulfilling the injunction, but on recalling the earnestness of the woman's manner, his suspicions were awakened ; and instead of taking it to the river he carried it to the authorities at Hyderabad. On examination it was found to be a communication between the Nizam's brother and the Nawaub of *Kurnool*, a small Mohammedan state, professedly in alliance with us, near Hyderabad, and about 130 miles from Madras ; and a further investigation led to the discovery of a deep-laid conspiracy against us.

A body of our troops was immediately despatched to the place, and information having been received of a quantity of arms and ammunition being secreted in the fort, permission was demanded to examine it. The Nawaub, trusting, probably, to the dexterity with which they had been concealed, made no difficulty in complying with the demand, and, with his own soldiers, marched out into the plain. The whole fort, including the Nawaub's palace, was strictly searched, by commissioners appointed for the purpose, but nothing suspicious could be found.

The gardens belonging to the " Zenana " or ladies' apartments, were divided into squares, separated by

high walls, and though this was the part of the palace the most suspected, the party had passed through the whole without making any discoveries. As, however, no doubt was entertained of the truth of the previous information, these gardens were subjected to a second and more rigorous examination ; and, to the astonishment of all, it was at length discovered that they formed a complete though secret arsenal. Many of the walls were double, with the spaces between them roofed over, and in these and in other hiding places, some under ground, were found between six and seven hundred field-pieces of artillery, with gun-carriages, cartridges, balls, muskets, a large quantity of gunpowder, and furnaces for casting guns, &c. Most of the guns had been newly manufactured, and the furnaces had been in recent operation, and little doubt could be entertained that Kurnool was only the centre of an extensive plot, and that, had we failed in Affghanistan (as they all hoped and expected), the Mohammedans would have been in arms throughout great part of India.* The friend who sent us the account of this from Madras, at the time it happened, adds : " How surprising that this should have been going on so under our own eye ! And then, whence could the funds have been obtained ? It is a fresh instance of the wonderful way in which God keeps us in India."

* See note B.

The remainder of the history of the Nawaub is deeply affecting, and gives us another ground for hope, that in the world of future glory many may be found, of whom the Church on earth knows nothing. He was sent as prisoner to Trichinopoly, but was only restrained within the walls of the extensive fort. Some time after he had been there, he began to read Persian and Hindostanee tracts on the subject of Christianity ; and so strong was the impression made upon his mind, that he sent several times to the Rev. Mr. Hickey, (a Missionary of the Society for Propagating the Gospel,) earnestly requesting an interview. As he was a state prisoner, Mr. Hickey thought it right to decline, unless he had permission from Government, and only promised, (and, I believe, afterwards sent) him a Hindostanee New Testament. Shortly after he expressed a wish to be present at the English worship ; and the two following Sundays attended the morning service in the church. On the last of these* he obtained permission to remain there, to be ready for the Tamul service in the afternoon ; and during this time several persons came into the church and entered into conversation with him. Among others was a Mohammedan, who approached him, bending low, and holding up his hands joined, as if in supplication. No sooner was he within reach of him, than he darted forward, and with a small

* July 12th, 1840.

"khuttar,"* concealed between his hands, he stabbed the unfortunate prince in several places. The guards rushed in and secured the assassin ; but it was too late, the mortal wound had been given, and the Nawaub was conveyed to his house in dreadful agony, where he only lingered a few hours. He sent again for Mr. Hickey, to whom he expressed his belief in Christianity, and anxiously requested baptism, but it was not thought advisable to comply with his request. In the midst of his sufferings, he exclaimed, pointing to heaven, " God is God," entirely omitting the ever customary words, "and Mahomet is his prophet."

The murderer proved to be a fakeer, he was executed, but persisted to the last that he had done a meritorious act, as the Nawaub intended to become a Christian ; and not only did the other Moham-medans in the place join in the same opinion, but the priests declared that the murderer was secure of being received into paradise.

I shall only add that I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

* Dagger.

LETTER III.

MY DEAR LUCY,

ON leaving Trichinopoly, and pursuing our course southward, we shall in a few days reach *Madura*, the capital of the extensive province of the same name. Cotton is largely cultivated throughout this part of the country ; and had your English muslin dress the faculties of sense and speech, it might perhaps claim relationship with some of the bushes as you pass along ; though I doubt, whether, after its foreign metamorphosis, its parents would recognize it as their own. These plantations are more profitable than picturesque ; the shrub is kept low, not unlike our currant bushes ; it bears a large and pretty lilac blossom, and a pod filled with cotton contains the seeds.

Madura was once the seat of the powerful Pandyan kingdom ; and though the native accounts of its splendour and importance are too much mixed with fable to be received in all their details, yet the outlines are fully corroborated by independent evidence.

It is the opinion of Professor Wilson that this monarchy was founded about B.C. 500, while the

temple at Jerusalem was rising again under the protection of the kings of Persia ; and probably during the time Haggai and Zechariah were delivering their prophecies. But how different is the history of God's chosen people from that of all other nations ! while the most minute events connected with the church of God are recorded by the pen of unerring truth, we have only fabulous or vague accounts of this mighty empire. In the time of our Lord, it appears from both Greek and Latin authors, that it extended from sea to sea over the whole of Southern India, from the river Valur* to Cape Comorin ; and ambassadors from the king of Pandya are mentioned, more than once, as visiting Rome in the time of Augustus.†

By degrees the dominions of this monarchy were greatly curtailed, partly by the states of Malabar asserting their independence ; and partly by the growth of the power of the Polygars, and other small principalities on the north and east. But, though diminished, its power was not broken, and it continued

* The river on which Porto Novo stands.

† The Romans must at some period have gained a considerable footing in the Peninsula, as a chain of mounds like Roman tumult, may be traced across from sea to sea, near Trichinopoly and Coimbatore. A mound near the latter place has lately been explored, and was found to contain weapons like those that have been opened in our own country.

a flourishing and powerful empire for many centuries. In the fourteenth century the Mohammedans over-ran the country, but did not permanently establish themselves there; and though much weakened and depressed by this fresh aggression, Madura continued to be governed by its own Hindoo sovereigns, called "*Nayaks*." One of the most remarkable of these was Tirumallee* Nayak, who began his long and prosperous reign about A.D. 1625. He built the famous Choultry that bears his name, for the use of the pilgrims who visit the Pagoda; and the architecture of this magnificent structure bears witness to his munificence. It is built of grey granite, and consists merely of one immense hall, 312 feet in length, and 125 in breadth; the roof is supported by six ranges of columns, twenty-five feet in height, many of them being a single stone. The style is "purely Hindoo and blends the square and massive character of the general structure with the singularly minute decorations, and luxuriantly fantastic development of the details." The pillars are covered with the most elaborate carving of figures of the Rajah and his family, of various Hindoo deities and other devices, and the ceiling is ornamented with the signs of the Zodiac.

This Choultry stands within the fort, which also

* Holy Mountain.

contains within its ample area a handsome Pagoda, and the palace of its kings. These last bear evident traces of the ancient Indian architecture, mixed with the more modern Saracenic.*

The last of the Pandyan sovereigns was a queen, named Minakshi Amman ; she was betrayed and deprived of her kingdom by Chunda Saib in 1736,† and when he afterwards yielded to the British forces, Madura and Tinnevely fell into our hands.

Early in the Christian era a college was founded at Madura for the cultivation of Tamul literature, and was renowned throughout India for the learning of its professors. Great pains were taken to cultivate the language, and to keep it free from Sanscrit words, which began to be brought in from the north ; and to this day no Tamul is considered pure that has any admixture of the northern tongues. The legends of former times tell us of a golden bench at Madura, on which the learned professors of the college were wont to sit, and which had the instinctive property of contracting or dilating itself according to the mental acquirements of those who attempted to seat them-

* Daniell's Indian views contain beautiful and correct representations of the public buildings in Madura, as also of the fort of Trichinopoly, and the rocks at Pavaanasam.

† The remnant of the Royal family are living somewhere in a village near Madura.

selves upon it, so that no unlearned person could ever gain admission. Probably this fable is meant to express the severe examination to which the candidates for professorships were subjected.

Leaving Madura, we will proceed to Tinnevely. It occupies the south-eastern extremity of the Peninsula, and is about 120 miles in length, and between sixty and seventy in breadth. It is bounded by the sea on the east and south, and on the west is separated from Travancore by the range of mountains called the Ghauts.

The northern part of the province, by which we enter it from Madura, is varied with hill and dale, and the plains are rich in fields of cotton and grain of various kinds, whose ample produce well repays the labour of the husbandman. Nearly the whole of this northern part is in the hands, or under the influence of large landed proprietors, called "*Zemindars*," the descendants of the old Polygars. They are a kind of feudal lords, and exercise a very despotic authority over their vassals and tenants; and yet, haughty and unyielding as they are to their dependants, they are themselves the slaves of superstition. One curious part of their superstitious observances, is the appointment of one person in the household of each Zemindar, whose sole business it is to prescribe the kind and number of dishes of which his master's meals are to consist; and to regulate, according to the Shaster, the

order in which they are to be served, and the quantity to be eaten of each. When the Zemindar has taken the proper number of mouthfuls, this master of ceremonies, without speaking a word, points to the book he is holding in his hand,—the dish is immediately removed, and the Zemindar must begin the next, which, perhaps, he does not like half so well as the one he has been forced to part with.

As we pass along, the mountains of the Ghauts rise at some distance on our right; their wild and richly wooded heights running down into the cultivated plains, and producing a beauty and variety of scenery scarcely to be equalled. Among these mountains, the rivers Sittaroo and Thumberavany take their rise; and though, like all other Indian rivers, they are held sacred throughout their whole course, the cataracts that occur near their sources render them still more honoured here than in the plains below.

The beautiful fall of Courtallum, on the Sittaroo, is highly venerated; pilgrims repair to it from all parts; the neighbouring villages are considered holy, and a considerable town, a few miles lower down the river, is honoured by the name of *Tencâsi*, or the Southern Benares.*

Courtallum itself, is, for very different reasons, a favourite resort of the English residents in Tinnevely.

* Câsi is the native name for Benares.

during the intense heat in the months of July and August. In this lovely spot they enjoy the refreshing coolness of an almost European atmosphere, and regain that vigour and elasticity of mind and body, which a tropical climate so soon destroys.

Twenty-five or thirty miles further to the south, on the river Thumberavany, is a still more celebrated waterfall, which has received the name (to a Christian mind how touching !) of *Pāvanāsam*, or washing away of sin.

Near the fall, some figures have been rudely sculptured on the adjacent rock ; and about a mile lower down, a pagoda has been built on a spot well chosen to attract the eye and seize on the imagination. More than half encircled by the wild rocks and mountains of the Ghauts, shut out from the plains below by a ridge of lower hills—with no approaches to it but by a narrow pass or a winding road, and no other human habitation to be seen—it stands with its gopurum and its extensive choultries, a melancholy monument of the power of the Prince of Darkness.

Surely, if the natural mind could of itself ever ascend, “from nature up to nature’s God,” it would be in such a spot as this, where the bold dark rocks—the noble trees—the loud roar of waters, and the eddying stream not yet recovered from the agitation of the cataract—all unite in proclaiming the power and majesty of Him who made them. But Satan

better knows the human heart, and it is especially in scenes like these that he appears to exercise the most uncontrolled dominion.

At the season of their frequent idol feasts, the place is thronged with worshippers; and the wild strains of their fantastic but not displeasing music, resounding at the evening worship along the spacious courts, and the glare of torches shedding an uncertain light on all around, produce a powerful effect on the imagination.

Even on common days you cannot visit it without being deeply moved—many a poor wanderer may there be seen whose "*câvi*," or sacred saffron-coloured cloth, tells you what has brought him to the place. From Trichinopoly, Madras, Calcutta, and even Benares, pilgrims may here be met with; many doubtless coming in hypocrisy and wilful self-deceit, but some among them in sincerity, hoping here to wash away the sins that lie heavy on their souls, and at last, at Pâvanâsam, to find the peace they have sought in vain at so many other shrines.

One of the most consistent Christians in Tinnevely was, some years ago, one of these wandering devotees. After going from mountain to mountain, from one sacred station to another, in the fruitless hope of finding rest to his soul, he was one day led by the Spirit of God to join a crowd of persons collected under a tree, listening to one of our Tinnevely missionaries, as

he published the glad tidings of the gospel of peace. Whether the word touched any other of the hearers I cannot tell ; but it reached this pilgrim's heart, and like a nail fastened in a sure place, it never left it. After a time he was baptized, and " Mallee Samuel,"* for that is now his name, has long known by happy experience where alone true peace is to be found.

Every thing near the pagoda of Pâvanâsam seems to be deified—the river itself is worshipped ; the rude bas reliefs on the rock near the water-fall are adored by prostrate pilgrims ; and the very fish receive a kind of religious homage. It would be thought impiety to kill them, they are constantly fed by the dancing girls of the pagoda, and are so tame that they will suffer them to play with them and take them out of the water for several minutes, without appearing to be frightened.

One day the curiosity of a friend of ours was excited by observing a bullock-driver, carrying a quantity of rice towards the river, and he followed him to see what he was doing. The man threw the rice into the water, and in an instant the clear bright stream was literally blackened by the shoals of fish that pressed forward to share in this favourite food. On inquiring of the man his reason for this liberality to the fish, he told him that his cattle had long been

* * "Samuel of the Hill," or "Mountain Samuel," so called from his former wanderings among the mountains.

suffering from disease, and that he hoped by this means to propitiate the fish, and induce them to communicate some healing virtue to the waters. He had left his herd of bullocks a few hundred yards lower down that they might be cured by drinking of the stream as it flowed on to them.

How many thoughts will come into your mind while reading of Pâvanâsam ! the “ fountain opened for sin and uncleanness,”—the tree whose “ leaves are for the healing of the nations,”—“ the water of life” of which all may drink “ without money and without price.” Many such passages will come before you, and fill you with adoring gratitude for our clearer light and surer hope.

It is, however, cheering to know, that the glad tidings of salvation have sounded even among the rocks of Pâvanâsam. Our missionaries have from time to time proclaimed the gospel even in the precincts of the pagoda ; and a tract left in a hermit’s cell, or in a basket amid the relics of idolatry by the way side, may, for aught we know, ere this, have made their way to the heart of some deluded worshipper.

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER IV.

MY DEAR LUCY,

I WILL return again to the northern district of Tinnevely, to tell you of the missionary work going on there, but must now transport you across the country, and place you among the palmyras in the south-eastern districts. The face of the country is here completely changed ; the tamarinds and other spreading trees have disappeared, and the almost level plain of arid sand, extending for many miles along the coast, and stretching far inland, seems to baffle the industry of man, and scarcely yields a shrub or vegetable to repay his incessant toil.

But the Providence of God has not forgotten him ; and here, where nothing else will grow, the palmyra is provided without human care or culture ; the sandy plains are covered with it, and though it can boast of no beauty in its outward form, it affords him a supply of almost all he wants.

From the wood of this tree the villagers procure the stakes and rafters for their huts ; the leaves*

* This singularly formed leaf grows in natural folds, like a large fan, only that the folds meet in the centre, and at the outer edge separate into long taper points.

they use for thatch, and for fences to their little gardens; or they split them into oleis* for their writing, or, cutting them into still narrower strips, make them into mats, or weave them into those pretty baskets you so often have admired.



YOUNG PALMYRA.

Of the fibres of the stalk they make their ropes and coarser mats, and the blossom and fruit furnish them with nearly all their food.

The villages in these palmyra groves are inhabited chiefly by "Shânars," an industrious hard-working race, reckoned among the lower subdivisions of the Sopdras.

* See Part I., Letter 9.

From all that I can find about them, I am much inclined to agree with those who consider them to have been the original possessors of the country, and that when the conquering army of Râm took possession of the richer northern districts, the Shânars were suffered to retain their palmyras unmolested.

One strong argument in favour of this conjecture, is, that in the southern part of Tinnevely, the highest class of Shânars, called "Nâdars," are the acknowledged proprietors of the soil ; and even when a Nâdan has sold a piece of land, he retains the right to a sort of quit rent. Indeed, the system is very like that of our lords of the manor, with the addition of the remarkable privilege, that in any dispute that is brought into a court of law, with regard to landed property, though all other classes are obliged to establish their claim by written documents, it is only necessary for a Nâdan to be identified as *the Nâdan* of such a particular spot, and the disputed property is adjudged to him, unless the opponent can *prove* his purchase of it.

The cultivation of the palmyra is also the exclusive right of one division of these people, called the "climbing Shânars," and is never infringed on by any others. It is indeed too difficult a task to be accomplished by any who have not been accustomed to it from early youth ; and some of our English boys who pride themselves on the ease with which

they can climb an oak or an elm, would be puzzled to know how to reach the top of a palmyra.



COCOA NUT AND PALMYRA TREES.

The annexed engraving shows you the character of the tree : it throws out no branches, and its tall stiff stem rising to the height of forty, sixty, or even

eighty feet, affords but slight assistance to the daring enterprise.

The Shânar, however, has a way of his own contrivance—he puts his feet into a long loop woven from the fibres of the leaves, whose roughness catching the slight unevennesses of the trunk, may assist him in his ascent, or preserve him from a fall : and with five or six earthen jars slung at his side, a knife stuck into his girdle, and without any covering but the cloth worn round the waist, and occasionally a breast-plate of leather, he clasps his arms round the tree, and with astonishing dexterity quickly gains the summit. Here, at the beginning of the palmyra season, he finds among the cluster of fan-shaped leaves that crown the stem, several large long sheaths that contain the flower buds. Over each of these he hangs a jar, and cutting off the top of the bud, the juice begins to flow, and he descends, leaving it to flow on till evening. Another and another tree is thus visited, and a skilful climber will sometimes visit as many as forty trees in the course of a few hours. They are generally thus employed from three or four o'clock in the morning till noon, when they return home to rest during the hottest part of the day, and go to work again from three or four o'clock in the afternoon till nine or ten at night.

For four or five months the bud continues to give

out its precious juice, and every morning and evening the industrious climber goes through the fatiguing task of visiting each tree, emptying the jars into a closely woven basket of palmyra leaf which he carries with him, and then makes over his hard earned treasure to the management of his wife.

You will readily suppose that this is a dangerous, as well as difficult employment; a single false step among the leaves, or one moment's letting go his hold in ascending or descending, precipitates the poor Shânar to the ground, and the half-yearly reports of the missionaries, frequently contain the account of one or more of their people who have been found dead or dying at the foot of their trees.

The work of the wife is less dangerous, but not much less fatiguing than that of her husband. As soon in the morning as she has arranged her few household affairs, she joins him among the trees, and begins her work by enclosing a small space with a fence of palmyra leaves. She then lights a fire with a kind of low thorn that grows here and there among the palmyras, and proceeds to boil down the sweet juice she receives from her husband, called in this state "*Puttaneer*,"* into a thick syrup, which she pours into cocoa-nut shells or holes scooped in the sand, where it hardens into a coarse black kind of

* "*Putta*," palm—"near," water.

sugar called "*Kuripekutti*."* If the poor woman can find a margosa or other spreading tree, she gladly avails herself of its shade, but these are very rarely to be met with, and she generally has to stand over the fire exposed to the burning rays of the sun, from the morning till six or seven o'clock in the evening. Her work is not yet ended, she must boil the rice for her husband's supper, and when he returns must bathe and shampoo his limbs to remove the stiffness, and prepare him for his next day's work.

The intoxicating liquor called "toddy," or more correctly "târi," is the fermented juice procured both from the cocoa-nut and palmyra ; but the Shânars of Tinnevely very rarely make this use of it, and in order to prevent the fermentation which otherwise would begin as soon as it was exposed to the air, they line their jars with a coating of lime.

The palmyra nut, in different states, supplies the principal part of the food of the Shânars during almost the whole year. While the season lasts, the puttaneer that is found in the jars in the early part of the day, is, as I have told you, boiled into kuripekutti, and a good piece of this, accompanied perhaps with a little salt fish or oil cake, forms the noonday meal. The supper consists of a little coarse rice and a draught of puttaneer, while this juice alone suffices for their simple breakfast.

* Black lump.

When the puttaneer season is over, the faithful palmyra yields them subsistence in another form. A certain number of the trees have been left untouched till the fruit is ripe, and this they now gather for present use or future produce. Every tree produces thirty or forty nuts, each containing three smaller ones embedded in a fibrous pulp, and filled with a cooling and refreshing substance like jelly. It is sometimes eaten in this state, but they more frequently roast the whole fruit, and peeling off the outer rind eat the remainder. But there is still another state in which this invaluable nut serves for food. It is kept till the outer shell is hard, the inner nuts are then taken out and planted in the patches of sandy ground that surround the village. In this favourite soil the nut throws out a taper root the size and shape of a small carrot, but in colour and taste like an indifferent potatoe, and as soon as the green shoot appears above the ground, it is dug up and affords support during another portion of the year. Now and then a family is rich enough to possess a cow, and the milk adds considerably to the comfort of their meals ; and a few of the people have little gardens where, by means of hard work and constant watering, they contrive to grow a coarse kind of plantain, either for their own use or for sale. Sometimes when they have more kuripekutti than they require for their own consumption, they boil it again

into a yellow sugar candy. This is in common use among the natives through all Southern India; and if on a journey your stock of real sugar-candy should be exhausted, you will be glad to meet with so good a substitute. On the spot it is sold in square baskets which are finished after the sugar-candy is put in, so that you must cut them open to get at the contents; but in the bazaars small quantities are exposed for sale in a little boat made of two leaves prettily fastened together with thorns.

In the very small villages the little dwellings are placed side by side without any attempt at regularity; but in the larger ones there are generally two or three principal streets planted with various kinds of trees, often with a kind of hibiscus (here called the tulip tree) whose blossoms, changing from bright yellow to a still brighter red, are very ornamental. Under these trees the women and girls may often be seen during the middle of the day spinning their native cotton, while the weavers are busily employed in preparing the threads to be transported to the loom; and if it is a Christian village the toil is often cheered by a Tamul hymn of praise, or by the catechist reading to them or helping them to commit to memory the words of Eternal Life.

But in thinking of these villages you must not picture to yourself an English cottage with its casement window half hidden by a honeysuckle or a China

rose—with the smoke curling from the chimney, and with its cheerful hearth and well rubbed homely furniture within. The Tinnevely hut has neither window, nor chimney, nor hearth, nor furniture. Low walls of mud (or sometimes only of palmyra leaves) with a roof of the palmyra leaf rising indeed in the middle, high enough to permit you to stand upright; but sloping down on every side to within two or three feet of the ground, and with a door too low to admit any but a child without stooping—form the exterior of these dwellings, while the interior presents the appearance of anything but comfort. Probably a fire of dried palmyra leaves or cowdung will be burning in an earthen chatty, and the smoke after filling the room finds an exit by the door, and as you will suppose, obscures the little light that can enter by this the only aperture.

The hut is generally divided into two rooms, each six or seven feet square, and separated by a partition carried about half way up, leaving the upper part open that the inner room may receive what air and light it can from the outer door.

A few earthen vessels, some cocoa-nut shells formed into cups and ladles, and two or three mats are often their only furniture, though sometimes they possess a few brass plates and drinking cups, and a kind of cot of palmyra wood to sit or sleep upon.

The men are fond of sleeping in the open air during

the dry season, and if you pass a village at night, you will most likely see some of the inhabitants lying down before their doors, wrapped in their long white cloths, as I before described to you in my account of the Choultry.*

Sometimes these huts have a small space in front, enclosed with walls of mud, in which they carry on their household work. In the accompanying wood-cut, you may observe one woman within, rolling the



SHANAR HUT.

ingredients with which to prepare for her husband the unusual luxury of curry ; another sitting at the entrance, is mixing some cow-dung with water ; and a third is plastering the mixture on the wall, where it

* Part I., Letter 11.

is to dry for fuel: while another of the inmates is lying asleep on the piol.*

These huts are rude and comfortless abodes, and the food of these poor people is coarse and hard fare, and yet, (as far as human eyes can penetrate) we believe and know, that among the palmyra groves of Tinnevely, there dwells many a child of God, and heir of future glory.

Adieu, dear Lucy,
Yours affectionately,
S. T.



NATIVE CHATTY.

* Part I., Letter 6.

LETTER V.

MY DEAR LUCY,

As the Hindoo population of Tinnevely differs in several important points from that in the neighbourhood of Madras, I shall give you a little further account of them before I proceed to any particulars of missionary work.

There are here, as generally throughout the peninsula, the three great divisions of *Bramins*, *Soodras*, and *Pariars*, or *low caste people*, and each of these divisions is as numerous subdivided here as in other parts of the country.* But, in these distant provinces, the characteristic distinctions are more developed than in places where the number of Europeans produces a greater degree of restraint; and the Bramins, in particular, assume a haughtiness of air, which is rarely seen in the neighbourhood of Madras.

They consider themselves exalted so far above other human beings, as to lose sight of all distinctions of rank in those below them; and they hold all, whether Soodras, Pariars, or Europeans, in equal contempt. If you meet a Bramin in the road, and

* It is said there are more than sixty divisions of caste in Tinnevely.

ask the way to any place, he will very seldom condescend to speak, and yet, with true native courtesy, he will never rudely pass you by; he will stop and point with his finger to the right direction. If you further inquire of him the distance, he will hold up his fingers, according to the number of miles, and if you still ask if the road is straight or winding, will draw his finger through the air to mark the various turnings; and when he has satisfied all your inquiries, will again move on in perfect silence.

The Braminee villages are chiefly built near the rivers; and in the early morning, both men and women may be seen performing their religious ceremonies, among the trees, and in the choultries that give to the banks of the sacred Thumberavany their picturesque appearance. It is a curious sight to see the Braminee women collected in little groups, and going through the various forms prescribed to them in their Shasters.*

They are enjoined to rise at a certain hour, and immediately to proceed to the river, where the first ceremony is to mix a certain quantity of saffron with the water, and bathe their hands and faces in it.† Water is then to be thrown a certain number of times over the shoulder, their "muntrums," (a kind of unin-

* Religious books.

† It is this which gives to the complexion of the high caste women the peculiar tinge of yellow.

telligible prayers), must then be gone through, and the name of Râm, or some other deity, duly repeated. They must afterwards pay homage to the Sun, by bowing to the East, South, and West, with their hand placed upon their mouth; and at last finish their unprofitable worship, (which, according to the devotion of the individual, lasts from one hour to two or three!) by washing their cloths in the river.

To perform this part of their ceremonies, they unwind the greatest part of their long garment, and taking the loosened part in both hands, dip it into the stream, and according to the Eastern mode of washing, beat it for some time against a stone.* Loosening the rest of the cloth, they wind the wetted end round their waist, and proceed to dip and beat the other: then folding it, wet as it is, in their own graceful manner, over and across their shoulders, they return home with a chatty of the sacred water for use during the day.†

* It is one of the many curious inconsistencies of the system of caste that women of the *lower* classes in Tinnevely (and probably elsewhere) would lose caste were they to wash their own cloths, and as they can seldom afford $\frac{1}{3\frac{1}{2}}$ of a rupee to have them done by the washerman, they wear them more dirty than can be well imagined.

† The Hindoos consider that neither wetted nor silken garments can convey contamination, and if a Pariah physician wishes to feel the pulse of a person of caste, a piece of silk is interposed.

The higher divisions of the Soodras do not, I believe, differ from those of the same caste in the neighbourhood of Madras—and the Shânar division I have already told you of; but there is a peculiar class who, though not actually belonging to the Soodras, rank with some of the subdivisions, and yet whose features and form of countenance differ so much from the rest of the population as to make it probable they had a different origin.

These are the "*Maravers*," whose villages are scattered along a strip of country near the coast from Ramnad to Cape Comorin, and though thus intermingled with the rest of the inhabitants, are perfectly distinct from them.

In former times they were a powerful people, possessing Ramnad and the adjacent country, but the northern conquerors gradually deprived them of the greatest part of their power and territory, and though for a time they regained some considerable power under the kings of Madura, who restored to them the guardianship of the famous temple of Ramiseram (opposite to Ceylon), their influence again declined, and the only superiority they now possess is that which arises from their own fearless and independent spirit.*

* Some persons have conjectured (and it seems not to be improbable) that the Maravers are the bears and monkeys spoken of in the Ramayuna, who having been them-

Their avowed occupation is thieving, indeed the very word *Maraver* means *thief*, and many histories are related of their extraordinary dexterity. So ingenious and daring are they in their attacks upon the property of others, that the neighbouring villages, and even the missionaries, find that their only security is in hiring one of these free-booters to protect them from the rest. The larger villages employ several of these strange watchmen, each of whom is held responsible for all property stolen from his employers, though their bold and reckless character often makes the poor people afraid of even their own protector.

At Palamcottah, some time ago, the widow of Stephen, the Mayaveram catechist,* then residing in the mission premises, was robbed of all her little possessions, and the Maraver was as usual called on to make good the loss. When told of the circumstance, he exclaimed that he had no doubt he knew who had committed the theft ; for that the Maraver of another part of the village bore him ill-will, and had most probably taken this mode of revenging himself, as he knew the loss would fall upon him. At his request she consented to take no farther steps till she saw

selves conquered by Râm, assisted him in the conquest of their neighbours, and then passed over with him to the attack upon Ceylon.

* Part I., Letter 14.

him again, and in a day or two he returned, telling her that if she would go the next day at a certain hour to the middle of such a field, she would find all she had lost. Some of her friends went to watch ; and at the promised time the goods were on the appointed spot, but so dexterously was it managed, that it was as if invisible hands had brought them, for no human being was seen near the place.

The religion of the bulk of the people in Tinnevely and Madura, is quite distinct from the Braminical, which as I formerly described, prevails throughout northern India, and the greatest part of the Peninsula. The Bramins themselves have a tradition that their ancestors came from some distant land, far to the north-west of Hindostan,* and met with little opposition in establishing their religion till they came here ; but that in these provinces they could obtain no footing, till having by their knowledge of astronomy foretold an eclipse, the people imagined them possessed of supernatural powers, and allowed them to settle among them, though the great body of them still refused to give up their own religion.

As there is a corresponding tradition among the Shânars, this story is probably at least *founded on*

* It is a curious circumstance, that the Bramins in Tinnevely (and the writer is told it is the same in Tanjore) though they speak *Tamul* in their intercourse with others, generally use *Teloogoo* among themselves.

fact, and it is made more probable by the circumstance that in Tinnevely and Madura the worship of Vishnoo, Siva, and the other Braminical deities, is confined to the Bramins themselves, and the higher divisions of the Soodras.

The Maravers, Shânars, and all the castes below them, are direct and avowed worshippers of evil spirits, and their religion is pre-eminently one of fear and terror.

The objects of their adoration are very numerous, many of them are female demons called Amân, and the story of one named Mootoo Amân will give you an idea of the rest. It is said that being for some offence cast out of the presence of her superior Soda-lamaden, and obliged to wander for many thousand years upon the earth, she besought him to bestow on her some boon that would make her banishment less irksome. He replied that the only one he had to give her was the power of injuring mankind, of destroying children, and rendering the earth unfruitful. With this she declared herself perfectly satisfied,—all she desired was to be worshipped, and whether from love or fear was a matter of indifference.

The endeavour of these poor idolaters to conceal the particulars of their belief and worship from the knowledge of Europeans, renders it difficult to obtain any complete account of either, but the kindness of several friends who have long resided among the

people, and had intimate intercourse with them, has put me in possession of several facts which help to throw considerable light on the subject.

The worship itself is called *Pei-Aradānai*, (or devil worship) and the places where the rites of this hateful idolatry are performed, are called "*pei-coils*," (or devil temples); no village is without one of these, and some have four or five. They are of various kinds; sometimes it is a mere shed, in which is placed the image of the demon, and before which the worship is performed; and sometimes it consists of a building containing several small apartments enclosed in a court. One in Mr. Blackman's district, and which has now been pulled down by its former worshippers, was a space about thirty feet square, surrounded by a wall; and round the interior of the enclosure was a roof supported by pillars which sheltered about fifty idols of different forms and sizes. At the destruction of the *pei-coil* the idols were broken to pieces, and used in building a Christian house of prayer.*

* Pieces of broken idols form also part of the walls of the church at Kadatchapuram. The people had formerly been in the habit of bringing images of stone or pottery, and placing them in fulfilment of some vow in one particular field near the village. The Christians of the place had from time to time taken opportunities of breaking nearly all of them, and when the present church was built, some of them were applied to the above purpose.

One distinguishing mark of the pei-aradânai is the erection of pyramidal heaps of earth from three to seven feet in height, and often coloured with alternate stripes of red and white. Occasionally they stand singly by the way-side, but you may frequently see three or four together; generally, but not I believe always, there is one or more of these pyramids in every pei-coil. They are only met with in Madura and Tinnevely, and some parts of Ceylon.

But the feature that peculiarly distinguishes this worship from the Braminical, is the offering up of *animal* sacrifices.* Buffalos, goats, sheep, pigs, and fowls, are used for this purpose, and sometimes as many as 300 or 400 fowls are slaughtered for one of their great festivals.

Except annual feasts in honour of some of the principal demons, they have no stated seasons for their worship. Their frequency seems to depend on the ability of the people to provide the offerings, or on the degree of their fear of some impending calamity.†

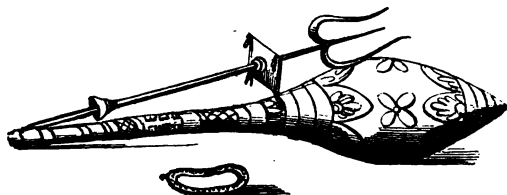
When one of these feasts is determined upon, the "*Asâri*," (or priest) gives notice to some person supposed to be a favourite of the demon, who prepares

* Part I., Letter 3.

† There is one of these pei-coils opposite the Mission-house at Sâtankullum, and during the prevalence of the cholera, some time ago, Mr. Blackman's family was disturbed every night for at least a month by the frightful noises.

himself by going through various ceremonies, and among others, holding his head over a censer of burning perfumes, while three or four musicians stand round, almost stunning him with the noise they make.

As soon as he is sufficiently excited, the "*pei-âdi*," as he is called, sets out for the spot where the worship is to be performed, followed by all the people of the village, with frightful shouts and loud discordant music. As he moves along, he brandishes a club and



trident spear, his legs are adorned with jingling bangles, and a long white cloth is folded round him, the ends of which are stained in dark deep red, with pictures of some female demon, holding a club and spear, and lamp, and sword in some of her many hands, leading a band of evil spirits, and surrounded by worshippers with various offerings.

When the party arrive at the *pei-coil*, the spirit of the demon is supposed to quit the image in which it usually resides, and to take possession of the *pei-âdi* ;

the sacrifices are slain before him, and he drinks the blood as it flows from the slaughtered animal.* Becoming more and more intoxicated,† or rather infuriated, he dances about in the most extravagant manner, his whole frame trembles convulsively, and he utters wild and incoherent sentences, which are received by the standers by as answers from the demon. Generally these are only promises vaguely expressed of some desired benefit, or the assurance of the removal of some evil; but it is a curious fact, that while in this state they often will carry a brass dish of burning coals on their bare heads, or a chatty of fire in their arms, with the flames playing about their face and neck, without sustaining any inconvenience.‡

These sacrifices take place in the evening, and the whole night is spent in feasting on the victims, and in all kinds of revelling and wickedness;§ but can

* Psal. xvi. 4; Gen. ix. 4.

† Isa. xlix. 26; Rev. xvii. 6.

‡ The Missionaries are careful of inquiring too closely into these particulars, lest the converts should be led to substitute imagination for reality; but a Maraver who was formerly one of these devil dancers, and is now a humble spiritually-minded believer, has told Mr. Blackman that though he cannot account for it, he has often experienced this, and has assured him that no preparation is used to prevent their suffering. Some persons think that occasionally it is a real possession.

§ The above is only a general outline of these ceremonies, the details vary according to circumstances.

you believe it, dear Lucy, that not unfrequently it is a *woman* who performs the dreadful part of one of these *pei-âdies* ? *

We know that it is sovereign grace alone that can rescue any soul from the slavery of sin and Satan, and bring it into the spiritual family of God ; but the Almighty power of that grace strikes one more forcibly when the previous bondage has been so visible, and the effects so fearful even to our outward senses. Many of these devil worshippers have been brought to the feet of Jesus ; and a spear, a club, or a cloth, given up in testimony of conversion, affords one of the most affecting memorials we can have of the power of the gospel.

Were you here, dear Lucy, the sight of some of those that have been kindly sent us by the Missionaries, would touch your heart, and fill you with thanksgiving to Him who can thus bring even a devil dancer out of darkness into His marvellous light.

I remain,

Yours affectionately

S. T.

*The Rev. P. P. Schaffter and the Rev. J. Thomas, have both witnessed this.

LETTER VI.

MY DEAR LUCY,

It is now about sixty years since the light of the gospel began to shine in Tinnevely, kindled there by the venerable Schwartz, whose zeal and love, unchilled by advancing age, led him to visit this province from Tanjore.

The Roman Catholic Missionaries had many years before established themselves in these countries, and Schwartz mentions that there were in his time no fewer than 30,000 converts in this province alone, but the manner in which they are spoken of agrees but too well with their present state, and affords a practical illustration of the hopelessness of "a corrupt tree" bringing forth "good fruit."

The successors * of this indefatigable man followed his example, many souls received the truth, congregations were formed and placed under the care of catechists, and for a while Christianity appeared likely to flourish there. But after a time the Tanjore Missionaries found themselves unable to visit these distant stations, persecutions arose in various

* Missionaries from the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge.

places, the love of many waxed cold, till by degrees, Christianity in Tinnevelly resembled a fire hid under its own ashes.

Things were in this state when in the autumn of 1816, the Rev. J. Hough, one of the chaplains of the East India Company, went to reside at Palamcottah; but sadly as religion had declined, he rejoiced to find there still remained some fruit of Schwartz's planting, and paid some interesting visits to several villages where Christian culture had not been bestowed in vain.*

These, however, were as nothing among the 800,000 inhabitants of Tinnevelly, over which the darkness of heathenism still hung; and Mr. Hough's interest was especially awakened by the number of intelligent youths who crowded the bazaars and other places of public resort. He resolved, with God's help, to do something for their mental and spiritual profit, and before March 1817, he had, partly at his own expense, and partly by the aid of the Church Missionary Society, opened three schools in Palamcottah, in which 103 native boys received instruction.

Such were the small beginnings of the Tinnevelly Mission, in which, at the time of Mr. Rhenius'

* It would be foreign to the writer's present purpose to enter into any account of these villages, and she would, therefore, refer the reader to "Hough's Answer to the Abbé Dubois."—"Pearson's Life of Schwartz," &c.

removal from Palamcottah, in 1835, there were no less than 2198 baptized Christians, and 8988 candidates for baptism; while it now numbers 6552 of the former, above 14,000 of the latter, and 1178 communicants; and Mr. Hough has been permitted to see what results are sometimes granted to the well directed exertions of one faithful and zealous individual.

Soon after this, two villages, that had been awakened by a copy of the New Testament, given to them some time before by a Missionary of the London Missionary Society, applied for a Catechist, and encouraged by these favourable openings, the Church Missionary Society resolved to establish a Mission here. The Rev. C. Rhenius and the Rev. B. Schmid arrived at Palamcottah in 1820, and they were afterwards joined by other missionaries. By degrees a regular establishment was formed; catechists and schoolmasters were trained, and appointed to promising stations;* excursions were continually made

* At first there was great difficulty in keeping these schools together. Sometimes the parents would be seized with a panic, lest their children should be sent to Tutucorin, and shipped off to England as slaves; at other times, a report would be spread that the missionaries obliged each boy secretly to swallow a little piece of beef; and in consequence of these, or similar apprehensions, a whole school would often suddenly absent themselves; and though, as their courage returned, the greatest part would gradually re-assemble, yet, many days, and sometimes weeks, of instruction were thus lost.

into the surrounding country; the large towns were visited, and the gospel proclaimed to the multitudes assembled at the idol feasts; and no opening was passed by, no means were left untried by these zealous men, which offered any hope of the extension of the Saviour's kingdom.

But I shall follow the plan I have proposed to myself in other missions, and without entering into any intermediate details, will pass on to its present state.

There are now six stations in the Tinnevely Mission, of which the original one of Palamcottah is occupied by the Rev. G. Pettitt. The Mission premises are situated about half a mile from the fort of Palamcottah, and two miles and a half from the populous town of Tinnevely; they consist of a good-sized compound, inclosing a comfortable house and garden, a neat church, a school-house, and a few native dwellings, inhabited by persons connected with the Mission.

Besides the Christians in and immediately round Palamcottah, Mr. Pettitt has the charge of *eighty-seven* villages, placed under the immediate superintendence of twenty-seven catechists. The number under Christian instruction in this district is 3522, of whom 1224 are baptized, and 247 are communicants. The school-house in the compound is occupied by the seminary lads, twenty-five in number who receive here a better education than can be given in the village

day-schools, and Mrs. Pettitt has a nice girls' school within the premises.

For the first five or six years of Mr. Pettitt's residence at Palamcottah, the Rev. J. Devasagayam* was associated with him in his work; but about a year and a half ago he was removed to Sâtankullum, to take charge of that district during the Rev. C. Blackman's temporary absence in England.

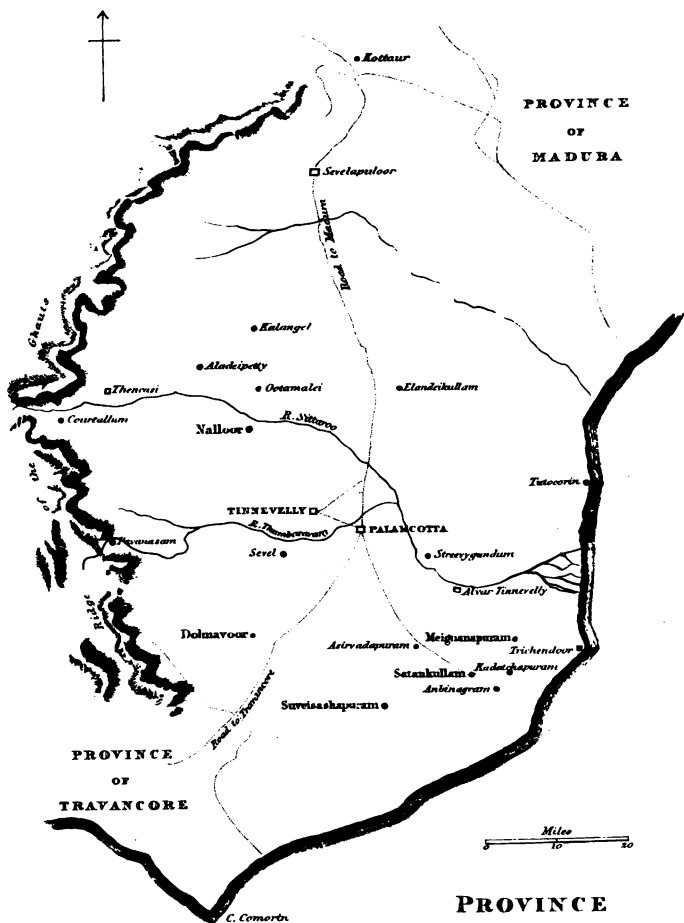
Sâtankullum is about twenty-five miles to the south-east of Palamcottah; the district contains 4365 persons under Christian instruction, scattered about in thirty-eight villages, 1392 are baptized, and 303 are communicants. There are also 443 boys and 250 girls in the various schools.

The Rev. J. J. Thomas has the charge of the comparatively new station at *Meignanapuram*, about six miles to the north-east of Sâtankullum. A mission-house has lately been built there, and the liberality of friends in England has provided funds for the erection of a substantial gothic Church and a convenient School-house. Mr. Thomas has the charge of forty-seven villages, in which there are 3384 persons who have joined our congregations, 1434 of whom are baptized, and 240 are communicants.

In the *Suveisashapuram* district, adjoining that of Sâtankullum on the south, the Rev. J. J. Müller†

* Part I. Letter 14.

† Since the above was written, it has been arranged,



PROVINCE
OF
TINNEVELLY.

has the spiritual superintendence of 4493 persons dispersed in sixty-four villages—996 of these are baptized, but I do not know the exact number of communicants. There are boys' and girls' schools both in this and in Meignanapuram districts.

The district of *Dohnavoor* to the south of Palamcottah, contains 1615 persons under instruction, residing in forty-three different villages, 379 are baptized, and twenty-eight are communicants.

The last formed district is that of *Nalloor*, extending over the northern part of the province. Here the Rev. P. P. Schaffter has had the care of ninety-four villages and 3277 souls—1127 of these are baptized, and 270 are communicants. For the present this district is under the charge of the Rev. Stephen Hobbs, as Mr. and Mrs. Schaffter left India in July last on account of their health, and have returned to Europe on a visit to their family and friends. Mrs. Schaffter's female school, the first established in Tinnevely, is left under the care of Miss Hobbs, who was sent out by the Society for Female Education in China and the East.

These numerous congregations have placed them-

that Mr. Müller should, on account of his health, pay a visit to Europe, and the Rev. E. Sargent should have the charge of the district. The Revs. J. T. Tucker and Sept. Hobbs have also joined the Tinnevely Mission, and Mr. Spratt, from the Madras Institution, is appointed to it.

selves under Christian instruction from various motives and under various circumstances ; but generally the movement begins from a few persons, who having heard something of Christianity, perhaps on a visit to a neighbouring village, persuade others to join them in requesting the nearest Missionary to send them a Catechist.

I shall give you a few particulars of a village which joined Mr. Pettitt in 1841, as it will give you some insight into the general state of society. It is a small place lying to the south of Palamcottah, and is inhabited by Shânars, though the whole belongs to a Bramin who resides at some little distance. Part of the inhabitants applied to Mr. Pettitt to be received among his congregations, and the proprietor hearing of this, went to the village to make inquiries on the subject. Assembling the people together, he addressed them to the following purport :—" I hear that some of you have determined to learn the new Vedam—now I do not wish to have any divisions or quarrels in my village, nor shall there be two parties here. Therefore all of you either remain in a body in your old religion, or else all join the new. If you like to embrace Christianity, do so ; I shall not oppose you ; and, if you like, you may turn your temple into a prayer house. Only all be of the same mind, and if you do not act justly towards me, I shall look to the Missionaries to see me righted."

The concluding sentence betrays the motive by which the Bramin was actuated ; but may we not trace the over-ruling hand of God in making use of this man's worldliness to bring a larger number under the sound of the gospel ? For the result was, that the first applicants were joined by the rest of the village, so that 200 have thus been brought under Christian instruction ; they have demolished their idols, valued at 200 rupees, and have given up their demon temple to become a temple of the living God.

During one of the Rev. J. Tucker's sojourns in Tinnevely, he had been visiting some of the villages, accompanied by the Rev. E. Sargent ; and on leaving one of them, they saw two men running after their palanquins, and evidently wishing to speak to them. They stopped, and found that they came from Streevy-goondum, a large town on the river Thumberavany ; that having been accidentally present during their visit to the village, a desire had been excited to hear more of Christianity, (of which they had known nothing before), and they earnestly entreated Mr. Tucker and Mr. Sargent to return with them to their native place. As it was Christmas Eve, and they wished to spend the next day at Palamcottah, they could not then return, but promised to do so at some future time. The report of the two young men had, however, awakened the curiosity of their friends, and a few days afterwards a party of them arrived at

Palamcottah, begging they might be visited without delay. Accordingly, on January 5th, Mr. Tucker, with the Rev. John Devasagayam, set out to this hitherto unvisited spot; and I shall give you the account in his own words:—

“We reached Streevygoondum at about half-past six in the morning. I told you before, the object of our visit. Some people of the Vellâlei caste came over to Palamcottah, and offered to place themselves under Christian instruction. The whole number of *families* was sixty. The Vellâleis are a high subdivision of the Soodras, though of course far below the Bramins. Almost as soon as we crossed the river, we came to high mud walls. This is the abode of the Vellâleis. They inhabit an extensive mud fort, into which none are admitted but Vellâleis, and the barber, washerman, carpenter, &c. From this mud fort the women never come forth, nor are they overlooked by any buildings, so that, from their birth to the day of their death, they are prisoners: and see neither man, woman, nor child, except a Vellâlei. We passed by this dreary fort, and near the large pagoda of Vishnoo, and came to the Choultry, in which we were to spend the day. I can only describe it as if it were a large open temple, supported by rough pillars of granite, carved, the roof of flat granite stones; the sides were bricked up, and the centre was raised about four feet. We put our palanquins on each side, and

ourselves took our seats on the raised part in the middle, with the lofty gates of the Siva pagoda directly before us. We were soon surrounded by a crowd, and had not long been seated, before five or six brawny, strong-built men came to us, with presents of plantains, sugar, and flowers, and one of them commenced an harangue ; the others standing by, with a stern expression of indignation in their countenances, such as I have seldom seen in India. They said they were '*Palleymar Vellâleis*,' the occupants of the mud fort, that they had learnt with astonishment that the '*Coteinar Vellâleis*,' who inhabit the same fort, had applied to us to teach them the Vedam (the Scriptures) ; that the consequences of their learning the Scripture would be most serious, for that they had been their slaves for 1000 years, and it was their destiny to be slaves for ever ; that it was the part of the Coteinar women always to attend upon their (the Palleymar's) wives ; that by old established custom, their wives never saw any human being but themselves ; were born, lived, and died within the fort, and knew nothing but the sun and moon ; that now they would have no one to attend upon them, and they would be driven to the dreadful necessity of burning themselves upon the pile. How could I assist in such horrors as these ? How could I be a charitable gentleman if I caused their wives to perish in the flames ?

“I endeavoured to interrupt the harangue from time to time; I reminded them that we were not come among them as magistrates, or collectors, but as ministers of Jesus Christ; that if they were willing, we would establish a school for them also, and teach them our Vedam, (this they indignantly rejected,) that as to their women burning themselves, they were well aware that the magistrates would not allow it, and that I must tell them plainly what our Master had commanded us to do. I then read to them, ‘Go ye into all the world,’ &c. : and I assured them, it was our fixed determination to obey His command, and that nothing they could say would hinder us. They said the Coteinars were every thing that was bad; to which I replied, that then they were just the persons who wanted the Gospel, and for whom it was designed. At last, they became so noisy and violent, that I was obliged to request them to take their leave, upon which they reluctantly retired, and sat down for some time near the gate of the pagoda, talking in an angry tone among themselves. We then had our breakfast, during which the people stood around us, never having (they said), seen a European eat before, much less a native,* sitting and partaking of the same food as an equal. During, and after breakfast, we kept up conversations, or rather discussions, with the people, who argued in the usual

* The Rev. J. Devasagayam.

way,—that there were four Vedams, each equally good ; that there was no difference between good and evil, &c. ; whilst we endeavoured to set before them their sinful state, and the misery of sin, and to direct them to Christ, as their Saviour.

“When the breakfast was cleared away, and while we were keeping up these conversations, we heard the ringing of bells within the pagoda ; the lofty gates were thrown open, and an elephant, adorned with bells made his appearance ; next to him a band of tom-toms, and after them a procession of eight or ten Bramins, with young boys in their train. The elephant and tom-toms stepped aside ; and the Bramins came forward, bearing presents of cocoa-nuts, plantains, and garlands of sweet-scented flowers. These being duly disposed of, one of them, in the name of the rest, commenced his address ; our protégés, the Coteinar Vellâleis, standing opposite to them, as they had done in the case of the former deputation. The contrast between the Bramins and the former speakers, the Palleymar Vellâleis, was very marked. The latter had manifested the haughty and stern spirit of uneducated men ; but the manner of the Bramins was distinguished by more politeness and subtlety, and more bitterness of contempt ; they bore the appearance of profligate men. The proem of their speech was, according to the rules of Aristotle, and the example of Tertullus, designed to gain a victory by flattering

compliments ; but the introduction harmonized as little with what followed, as the fruits and flowers with the rest of the scene."

The remainder of this history may soon be told. The result of the visit was, that a school was established among the Coteinars, and a catechist appointed occasionally to visit them. The Palleymars, however, indignant at their slaves presuming to think for themselves, made their lives still more bitter with hard bondage, and at last forced them to yield. One day, as one of the missionaries was sitting in his room at Palamcottah, a young man presented himself at the door, with his cloth drawn over his face. On being asked what was the matter, he exclaimed, "Oh! they are all gone back!" It appeared that the poor Coteinars, unable to resist the persecutions of their masters, had broken up the school, and withdrawn from Christian instruction. The young man who thus brought the intelligence, (and who was one of the two who originally followed Mr. Tucker and Mr. Sargent,) and two or three others, were the only ones who had remained firm.

They removed from Streedygoondum, and settled near Palamcottah. The subsequent history of the others I do not know ; but this young man has gone on stedfastly in his Christian course, and is now, I believe, a catechist.

How often do we see, that even in the most dis-

couraging cases, the word of God does not return to him wholly, "void," and surely we may rejoice with thanksgiving, if only "one of a city, and two of a family," are brought unto Zion.

I remain,

My dear Lucy,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER VII.

I HAVE two reasons, my dear LUCY, for dwelling more at large on the Tinnevely Mission than I might probably have otherwise done ; one is, that I have fortunately had opportunities of personal intercourse with several missionaries who have been lately residing there, and the other, that by so doing I shall more fully meet your own wishes.

Indeed I well know what peculiar interest you take in this field of missionary work—this spot which has long called forth the love, the sympathy, and prayers, the hopes and fears of so many of God's servants in India and in England, and which has endured such struggles and siftings, from the divisions of brethren within and the opposition of the heathen without. How many an eye has glistened with a tear, how many a heart has sent up prayer and praise to God, as it watched this infant church through its troubled course, and now trembled, now rejoiced, at the many perils through which God has carried it !

Truly this garden of the Lord has experienced the keen north wind as well as the gentle southern breeze ;

but in their turn they have caused the spices to send forth a fragrance that reaches even to us, and notwithstanding many a defect and many a deficiency, it has yielded, and we firmly trust will still yield, many a pleasant fruit to Him who planted it.

Twenty-five years ago Tinnevely was full of idols ; 2700 pagodas, and 10,000 demon temples defiled the land ; and all was darkness except the remaining rays of light that glimmered here and there in some village under the care of the Society for Propagating the Gospel.

Who that knew it then would have dared to anticipate what it is now likely to become? Who could have ventured to hope that, in the use of the ordinary means of grace, the labours of so very small a number of Missionaries should have been so blessed ; that in connexion with the Church Missionary Society alone our church numbers, as I have just told you, within her pale, nearly 6600 baptized persons, 1200 communicants, besides more than 14,000 others who have renounced their idols and submitted to the instruction and discipline of the Church.* No pagoda has yet been deserted, but many demon temples have been destroyed and Christian houses of prayer erected where they stood.

But do not, dear Lucy, imagine that I mean that

* The Society for Propagating the Gospel has also many thousands under instruction.

all these 14,000 inquirers are actuated by high and holy motives, or that the baptized never go astray, or that even the communicants have attained the full measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. The church in Tinnevely is just what all churches have been and all churches will be till the Lord himself shall come to reign—it is a net that encloses fish of every kind, bad as well as good;—a field in which tares are mingled with the wheat, for here, as everywhere, “Many are called, but few are chosen.”

To those who know the debasing power of idolatry, it will not seem a small thing that this sin which God so specially denounces should be losing ground; that the sound of salvation should be proclaimed throughout the land; that thousands should have given up their open immoralities, and that some of Christ's sheep should be gathered “out of this naughty world,” even though they still form comparatively but a “little flock.”

Some of the inquirers are evidently moved by a sense of sin to seek a Saviour; but the greater part are led by lower, and some it is to be feared by mere worldly motives; and even among the communicants there is often a want of firmness and consistency that costs the missionary many a pang, but which we shall cease to wonder at when we remember that they were brought up in idolatry and open sin, and were

taught by their heathen parents that falsehood and deceit are only wrong when they are detected.

The Christians in Tinnevely have much to endure that is very trying to the natural heart. Not only are they continually exposed to the taunts and insults of their heathen neighbours, but frequently actual force is made use of to prevent them from joining our congregations, or to draw them back if they have done so.

In the northern district the great enemies are the Zemindârs ; and I could give you many instances of their injustice and oppression. In one place they have by violent threats prevented the people from finishing a little chapel they had begun to build, and at another obliged them with their own hands to pull down one they had just before joyfully erected, leaving them no retreat but a stable for daily instruction and worship. Nor is it easy for the injured to obtain any redress in cases where the offenders have no scruple in employing perjury and dissimulation to support their cause.

The Zemindâr of Ootamalei is especially active in his endeavours to stop the progress of Christianity. He exercises a kind of lordship over a very large number of villages, and is continually devising some means of annoyance and injury to the Christians among them. The latest act of violence I have heard was at a village called Romanoor, where he

surrounded the church during the time of Divine worship, with armed men, drove the congregation out of it, and destroyed the building. In this case, however, the law has interfered, and for the present he refrains from outward acts of persecution.

But notwithstanding all this opposition, the Word of God still makes progress in the northern district. During the last year of Mr. Schaffter's abode there, fifteen villages put themselves under instruction, and in his last circuit among the congregations, 140 persons, including children, were baptized.

In one case, the Zemindâr himself was made the unconscious instrument of spreading the very truth he was labouring to destroy. Two young men, weavers, being driven from their homes by his persecution and unjust claims, fled to a distant village to the north. For a long time nothing was known of them; but about a year ago, Mr. Schaffter had the comfort of hearing from them, and of finding that God had greatly blessed them in their place of refuge. Shut out as they were from all outward means of grace, and dwelling in the midst of heathen, they had not only continued steadfast themselves, but had prevailed on three families of their new neighbours to renounce idolatry, and to place themselves under Christian instruction. They sent to request a catechist might be appointed to their village, but unhappily there was none to send; and the only

arrangement that could be made was, that a distant one should occasionally visit them.

In the south, the spirit of opposition from the heathen has lately assumed a more fierce and determined aspect. The principal people in the large towns of Trichendoor and Alvar Tinnevelly collected together, to the number of 300 or 400, and not daring openly to attack Protestant Christianity by name, have contrived, as they hope, a mode of destroying it by a sidelong blow. They formed themselves into a society called the "Viboothi Sangam," or "Ashes Society," the members of which are required to swear, by the sacred ashes, that they will be true to the old religion and the customs of the country, and firm in their opposition to Christianity. Their chief object is to insist upon every native continuing to smear his forehead with ashes, well knowing that a compliance with this heathenish custom, is in fact a renunciation of the Gospel. Regulations were made by the people of Alvar Tinnevelly, that none should enter the town for the purpose of buying and selling, without this badge of Siva on their forehead.*

Messages were sent to the headmen of the different villages, who had lately put themselves under Chris-

* This affects the congregations belonging both to the Society for Propagating the Gospel and the Church Missionary Society, but does not touch the Roman Catholics, as among them the use of ashes on the forehead is allowed, when they mix with heathen at fairs, markets, &c.

tian instruction, to demand their attendance at Trichendoor, where many were induced by threats of violence to backslide. Mobs, in one instance, to the number of 500, assembled in different places, and attacked several villages, pulling down prayer-houses, robbing houses, turning people by force out of places of worship, and forcing them to smear their faces with ashes.

You will anxiously inquire what the result has been ? Alas ! many hundreds in the district of Palamcottah, and as many as 1000 in that of Meignanapuram, alarmed at the violence of their enemies, and deprived of their usual means of disposing of the produce of their labour, have renounced Christ. How many of these have, in their secret soul, repented of their sinful fears, and would fain cut off the hand that placed the guilty mark upon their brow, we have no means of knowing ; but our prayers may ascend to Him who turned and looked upon Peter, that many of these may yet be saved, though as by fire.

I must, however, tell you, that the defection occurred almost entirely from among those congregations who had lately joined us ; not one baptized person, and only a very few of those who had been for any length of time under instruction, could be prevailed on to comply. Indeed, the attempt was chiefly made on the newly-formed congregations, the older ones were left quietly to themselves ; and, upon the

whole, the opposition of the enemies of the Gospel has rather established, than hindered, the work of God among the people of Tinnevely.

The places of those who have fallen back into idolatry have been more than supplied by new inquirers ; in the district of Suveisashapuram, *one thousand three hundred and eighty-two persons* have come forward within *the last year*, and several hundreds have done the same in that of Palamcottah.

In the districts of Sâtankullum and Meignanapuram, where the persecutions of the "Viboothi Sangam" has been the most violent and determined, but few fresh persons have, during the last year, put themselves under Christian instruction ; but those who have remained stedfast, have shown an increased desire for the means of grace. In the former district, the number of baptisms in 1842 was *four hundred and eighty-five*, the *increase* in the number of communicants was *one hundred and seventy*, and many of those residing in villages where the Lord's Supper is administered only once in the quarter, have lately come over every month, several miles to Sâtankullum, that they may have the privilege of more frequently receiving it.

During the same year, the *increase* in the number of communicants in the district of Meignanapuram was between *forty and fifty*, and the baptisms amounted to *four hundred and thirty-seven*. The

Christmas Day of 1841, when the persecution was at its height, will long be remembered at the village of Pragasapuram ; for there, on that day, no fewer than *one hundred and nine* persons publicly showed they were neither afraid nor ashamed to profess the faith of Christ crucified, and received the sign of adoption into the family of God.*

Thus, my dear Lucy, as in the times of the apostles, the efforts of God's enemies against His Church, have "fallen out rather to the furtherance of the Gospel."

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

* The congregation in this village is in a very encouraging state ; there are 600 persons belonging to it, of whom sixty-three are communicants.

LETTER VIII.

MY DEAR LUOY,

THE Missionaries in Tinnevelly generally pass eight or ten days in every month among the different villages in their districts, but after the account I have given you of the number each Missionary has under his care,* you will not be surprised that few of the congregations are visited by them more than three or four times in the year, and the more distant ones not oftener than once or twice.

The care of the people during the intermediate time is entrusted to the native Catechists, two of whom are sometimes appointed to one of the larger villages, while if the number of Christians or inquirers is small, one Catechist often has the superintendence of several congregations. Schools also are established to as great an extent as funds or teachers can be found.

Each Missionary assembles the Catechists and schoolmasters of his own district once a month, to hear their report of their several charges, to examine into their own progress, to read with them and instruct them, and to make arrangements for the ensuing month. They usually spend from the

* See Letter 6.

Saturday till the Tuesday in this manner, and the administration of the Lord's Supper on the Sunday, strengthens the bond of union among those who spiritually partake of it.

This plan is, as you will suppose, far from being properly efficient, yet with the present small number of Missionaries, it is probably the best that can be adopted.

And now I must invite you to accompany the Missionary on one of his visits to a distant village, and to participate in some degree in his feelings of love, and joy, and hope, as well as of sorrow and disappointment.

We will suppose ourselves in one of the Southern districts, where, as I have already told you, the country is extremely flat, and a considerable part of it is covered with extensive palmyra groves, among which are scattered the numerous Shânar villages. The roads or rather wide paths that lead from one place to another, are sometimes irregular openings cut through a thick wood of natural growth, and sometimes pass through regular lines of trees planted by the hand of man.

A remarkable feature in this part of the country, especially towards the coast, is the occasional occurrence of what are called "thairies," or plains of barren sand in the very midst of a palmyra forest. As you ride along, you observe no symptom of

approaching barrenness, except perhaps that the trees may be rather lower and less vigorous in their growth, till you suddenly find yourself on the edge of one of these plains, or rather succession of low sand hills, and after riding and walking (for in some parts it is not safe to ride) three or four miles across it, it as suddenly ceases, and you again find yourself among the palmyras. These thairies appear to be caused by violent eddies of wind, ploughing the sand into deep furrows, or collecting it into hillocks ; though why these eddies should occur in these particular spots is still unexplained. They are supposed to be of recent formation, for sometimes a strong wind has, as it swept along, laid bare the household implements and vessels of some former inhabitants, giving, it is to be feared, too sure a proof of the destruction of human habitations. There is reason to think they are gradually extending ; and fears are entertained lest one village in particular, that stands on the edge of one of them, should shortly share the fate of those already buried.

But we will leave these spots of desolation and pursue our journey. Should the friend we are travelling with doubt if he has taken the right direction, and ask any of the people we may meet, the way to such and such a place, you will be surprised at the terms in which the answer is given. Instead of bidding you to turn to the *right* or to the *left*, as we

should do in England, they will tell you to go towards the *South*, or towards the *North*, or to bear off towards the *East*, &c. ; and so general is this reference to the points of the compass, that I have been told by a friend who has often visited the schools, that if one boy wishes another to move a little one way or the other, he always uses the expression, North, South, East, and West.

Perhaps if it is the spring or summer, we may be startled as we draw near the village, by an unexpected sound of welcome high above our heads, and looking up we may see a man at the top of some tall palmyra, bidding us "Good day," and inviting us to a morning draught of "Puthaneer." We cannot please him better than by accepting his simple courtesy, and in a shorter time than I can write it, he will have descended the tree, bringing with him a leaf which is to serve us for a cup. Gathering together the long points of the outer edge, and giving them a peculiar twist, he in a moment has made a little boat, into which he pours the puthaneer, and both natives and Europeans agree, that it is never so refreshing as when thus fresh from the tree, and drunk from one of these leafen vessels.

As you draw still nearer the place of your destination, you will most likely hear a drum, for if the people know of the intended visit, they will have sent out a boy to watch the Missionary's approach,

and give notice to prepare for him. All is eagerness and bustle—the children hurry out to welcome him, each hoping to get a smile, or a look, or a word of recognition from this messenger of glad tidings, whose heart may well yearn over these lambs of the flock, and commend them in faith and prayer to their gracious Shepherd, to “carry them in His arms and bear them in his bosom.”

It is now about seven in the morning, and as I am describing a week-day visit, most of the men are probably out at work ; but as he passes up the street, many a pleasant look and “Salaam-iyah,”* await him from the women, who, with their infants on their sides, come out of their doors to greet him.

With a full and anxious heart he makes his way to the church, or rather *prayer-house*, for though now and then the building is of brick and chunam, and as large as a village school-room in England, it is much oftener a mere hut with walls of mud, about four or sometimes five feet high, and a roof of palmyra leaves ; a few slits are left in the walls to serve as windows, but the heat and closeness are almost insufferable.

Here, while his breakfast is preparing, the Missionary will collect together as many of the people as he can for morning prayer and exposition, and afterwards he will examine them as to the progress they have

* Literally, “Peace to you, Teacher.”

made since his last visit, inquiring into their conduct, and endeavouring as much as possible to get acquainted with their real state.

As you listen to their answers and observations, you will occasionally be forcibly struck to observe how the natural heart is the same in all climates and under all circumstances ; the same in the almost untutored Shânar, as in the early taught and carefully disciplined member of an English congregation.

How often, even in a place where the true way of salvation is plainly declared from the pulpit Sunday after Sunday, and where the teaching in the Sunday-school has been "line upon line, precept upon precept," that CHRIST *alone* is the way, the truth, and the life—how often, dear Lucy, do you not find, both in conversation with adults, and in questioning the young, that repentance, or prayer, or obedience is dwelt on as the ground of the sinner's hope and of reconciliation to God ! And so it is in Tinnevelly ; brought out of heathenism, and desirous of instruction, these poor people long cling to the law of works so congenial to the natural heart ; and too often is the Missionary pained and disappointed by their confused or erroneous views on that all-important point. And yet there are some among them, whose simple faith gladdens his spirit, and whose quiet faithful answers, or intelligent though silent looks, will find a response in your own heart, and awaken "joyful, tearful "

praise to Him who so often choses the weak things of the world, and while hid from the wise and learned, reveals Himself to the lowly.

About noon the Missionary has prayers again, and now the congregation is considerably increased, for the men have come in from their work to rest during the heat of the day ; and the visit of a Missionary is so welcome, and, alas ! so rare an occurrence, that the greater part of them suffer neither weariness nor indolence to keep them from the house of God.

The sound of the church-going bell is as yet unknown in the palmyra forests, but in its place, the people are summoned to Divine worship by a rude kind of drum,* made from the root of the palmyra hollowed out ; a buffalo's hide is stretched over it, and fastened down with thongs, or nailed round the edge, and before it is used, it is brought out to stand a little while in the sun to tighten the skin, or in wet weather it is held over a lighted bunch of straw. The boys are generally the performers, and it is often a subject of eager ambition among them, who is the best and loudest little drummer.

The afternoon is partly spent as the morning, and partly taken up in examining the schools, settling disputes, and conversing with any who wish it. All this time the heathen (if the village is only partly Christian), though they will not enter the little

* In some of the larger villages a ghurree has lately been introduced. See Letter 9.

Church, are peeping in at the door or listening at the windows, receiving, it may be, some scattered grains of heavenly wisdom to spring up "after many days."

Occasionally the Missionary has the painful task of separating from the congregation some who have proved themselves unworthy of the privilege, either by allowing their families to intermarry with heathens, or by persisting in an habitual neglect of the means of grace.

When the sun gets low and the air is cool, he often walks about the village, ministering to the sick and visiting some of the people in their own cottages, and if the village is a small one, he will be able to leave it the same evening. If night comes on before he reaches his next place of destination, he may, if travelling on horseback, chance to lose his way, and will probably think it prudent to stop at the first favourable spot, where, under some friendly tree, he may spread his leathern bed upon the ground, and safely rest till morning.

On one of these occasions the Missionary having dismounted, and made his simple arrangements for the night, strolled about till he came unexpectedly upon a little Braminee village; there were some children playing about, and as he spoke Teloogoo, and knew that this is their familiar language, he addressed them in it. The children, surprised to hear it spoken by any but their own people, particularly by an European, ran into the village to tell of

the wonderful event, that they had seen a white man who spoke Teloogoo ! Three of the Bramins came out to ascertain the truth of this extraordinary assertion, and finding the Missionary under the tree, to which he had by this time returned, sat down, and entered into conversation with him on the subject of religion, making many inquiries with regard to Christianity. After about an hour's talk, one of them got up, and telling his friends to wait till he came back, made towards the village. Presently he returned, bringing with him a pot of milk, and some wood and straw for the horse ; all of which he insisted on the Missionary's accepting, nor would he take any remuneration for the seasonable supply.

Resuming his seat on the ground, he again joined in the conversation, and from 7 o'clock till 10 at night was thus spent, under the starry canopy of heaven, in quietly discoursing on subjects of eternal interest. Who can refrain from breathing a secret prayer, that one or all of these may be found among the hidden ones, when the Lord "makes up His jewels."*

I must reserve any account of a *Sunday* visit to a distant congregation for a future letter, and will now only add that I am, as ever,

Your affectionate friend,

S. T.

* Little incidents like this are not unfrequent, and it may be hoped that much indirect good is done in this way.

LETTER IX.

MY DEAR LUCY,

I SHALL select *Kadâtchapuram* as the village to which we will pay our Sunday visit ; but before we proceed there, I must give you a little account of its origin and growth.

Many years ago, in the time of the Rev. C. Rhenius, a Society was formed, called the "Native Philanthropic Society," one of whose principal objects should be to purchase land for *Christian Villages*, where the converts might be sheltered from the violence and persecution of their heathen neighbours, and might be brought more within the reach of regular instruction and superintendence.* This Society, supported by voluntary contributions, still subsists, and as many as *forty* of these little cities of refuge have, one after another, risen up in the different districts.

The general plan has been to fix upon some small village, where the whole of the inhabitants are under Christian instruction, and where some, or all of the land is to be disposed of. This is purchased by the

* This plan was originally introduced by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge. Their stations of Moodeloor and Nazareth are both of this description.

Society, and the Missionary begins by persuading the people to pull down their few miserable straggling huts, and to rebuild them more neatly, and in regular order.* Christians from the neighbouring villages are invited, or permitted to settle there, and by degrees a regular street is formed and planted, and the place begins to assume an air of comfort unknown before.

Kadatchapuram† was one of the earliest Christian villages, and one street was added to another, till there are now four running parallel to each other and one or two that cross them at right angles.

By degrees the mud house of prayer was found too small for the increasing population ; a larger one capable of containing 150 persons, was built of brick and chunam ; and those who worshipped there literally trod underfoot their former idolatry, for some of their broken idols were laid as steps for the entrance.

But still the congregation continued to increase ; the prayer house was again become too small, and neither the Missionary (the Rev. C. Blackman) nor the people could be satisfied without a larger and more appropriate place of worship.

* The Christian cottages do not differ from the heathen in their form or materials, only in being neater and better built.

† "The village of Love."—It is in the district of Sâtankullam.

But what was to be done for funds? The Church Missionary Society could afford no pecuniary aid, and the Missionary could not of course, undertake it on his own responsibility.—Undeterred by difficulties, Mr. Blackman, in a spirit of prayer and perseverance, applied to friends at Madras—to his fellow-labourers in Tinnevely, and to the congregation themselves to assist him in this good work.—All these appeals were responded to, and it was a peculiar joy to him, to find the headman of the village encouraging the people to do all they could; to hear of 150 of them setting out to fetch each a load of tiles from a place ten miles distant; and to receive subscriptions of a rupee each, from persons whose earnings amounted to only two rupees a month, and who thus ungrudgingly contributed a fortnight's livelihood to build a house of God.

Mr. Blackman commenced the work, and in June, 1841, a neat, substantial Church, eighty feet in length, and capable of containing six hundred persons, was opened for Divine worship; the Missionaries, both of the Church Missionary Society, and of the Society for Propagating the Gospel attended, and the Church was filled to overflowing. The whole cost was less than £160.*

* A small debt of £13. still remains unpaid, and there are a few things still wanted to complete it, e.g., a pulpit, communion plate, &c.

Let us now proceed to our promised visit there, and we will choose a Sunday when the Missionary himself will be present. Mr. Blackman always visited it once a month, and arriving about half-past six in the morning, began by having the early morning prayers, and gave notice of the time of public worship. The drum has here given place to a "*ghurree*," a round plate of brass, which is suspended from a tree, and when struck with a wooden mallet, produces a sound that at some distance might be mistaken for a bell.

Half an hour before the service, the ghurree is struck to summon the people "to praise and pray," and long before the time arrives the Church is filled. The absence of both desk and pulpit prevents it at present from having so church-like an appearance as our own places of worship, and the want of them is supplied by merely a table and a small desk upon a stand. The clear open space is filled on one side by men, and on the other by women, all sitting cross-legged on the ground, and the women with their cloths so arranged as to cover the head, and a great part of the face. Many of them bring their infants, and though this does not, as you may suppose, increase the quietness of the service, yet it would be hard to deprive these poor mothers of any of the means of grace of which they so much stand in need. The school girls sit on one side of the desk, and the school boys on the other.

And now let us listen to our beautiful Liturgy in Tamul, from the lips of one, in whom all that love the Lord must feel peculiar interest—the Rev. John Devasagayam,* who, during Mr. Blackman's absence has, as I have told you, been put in charge of the Sâtankullam district. He still retains his native dress, but has added to it, as the distinguishing mark of an ordained minister, a belt of black cloth, and wears the surplice and scarf both when reading and preaching.

As the service proceeds, you hear the responses clearly and accurately made by the children and others in the congregation; for though, from want of funds, but few of the people can be supplied with prayer books, the quickness of their minds, and their retentive memories have made them familiar with great part of the service. They are fond too of joining in the Tamul hymns, which are sung to English tunes, as in our own village churches.

In the sermon, the plan of occasionally stopping to ask the people questions, is found very useful in keeping up their attention as well as in ascertaining how far they understand what they hear. They do not always wait to be asked; a nod of the head, accompanied by a half expressed "*Mai thán*" (that is quite true) sometimes expresses their interest and assent; and often when the Missionary alludes to

* See Part I. Letter 14.

some text, and pauses while he turns to his Bible for the exact words, some of the people will repeat aloud different passages which seem to them appropriate.*

After the sermon the greater part of the congregation retire, but some remain behind to gather round the table of the Lord ; and your heart will overflow to see these, once under the open dominion of the prince of darkness, now coming forward to partake of the feast which is there prepared for them.

As you watch them, one by one, approach to take their places, your eye will probably rest on an aged woman, whose worn and shabby cloth (though neat and clean) bespeaks her poverty, but whose placid thoughtful countenance is a fit index of the spirit of peace and holiness that dwells within. When Mr. Blackman took charge of this village, six years ago, he could not help observing the appearance of this woman ; always in her place, and always atten-

* In one of the latest accounts from the Rev. John Devasagayam, he mentions a good old man at the village of Anagragapuram, above eighty-four years of age, who never would leave the Church till he had repeated the text of the sermon to the Catechist, and had assured himself that he knew it correctly. When too ill to walk by himself, he was supported to the house of God by his two sons. He has since entered into eternal rest, full of joy and hope, leaving behind him a widow of nearly the same age as himself, who, in the midst of her tears can rejoice in the prospect of so soon following him to what he used to call "the good house in heaven."

tive, her quiet intelligent countenance seemed as if she were drinking in every word that fell from the messenger of God, and receiving it to the instruction and refreshment of her soul. On inquiry, he found she was a widow, suffering from poverty and want of health, but whose heart the Lord had opened, and who, like Anna the prophetess, was unwearied in her attendance on the means of grace. At the end of a year she was baptized, and became a regular communicant ; and as at that time the Lord's supper was not administered at Kadatchapuram, she used every month to walk over to Sâtankullam (a distance of five miles) and back again, that she might enjoy this means of spiritual sustenance.

She cannot read, but is very fond of having the word of God read to her ; and often gets the school-mistress to read the Psalms, while she repays the kindness by explaining passages into which her greater spiritual experience gives her a deeper insight. She has the comfort of seeing her daughter, who was educated at the day school here, grow up a young woman of piety and consistency ; she is now married to the catechist of a neighbouring village, and assists in one of the girls' schools.

The injunction in 1 Cor. xvi. 2. is literally carried out in Tinnevelly. In every large village the Catechist remains in the Church after the Sunday service, to receive the offerings of the congregation

for the relief of those still poorer than themselves. One woman will drop a piece of Kuripekutti into the basket ; another a piece of oil cake ; and a few pice* will perhaps be brought by a third, in rather better circumstances than the others. All these are distributed, as occasion may require, among the destitute and aged.

I must not leave the subject of the Sunday services without mentioning the baptisms, which are generally administered, as with us, after the second lesson. The rite of baptism is in itself most interesting, but it is peculiarly so in a heathen land, where it involves a renunciation of the earliest associations, of the most settled habits, and often of the most endeared relations ; and requires more moral courage than we perhaps can fully enter into. Happy is it when the members of the same family are united also in the bonds of the same holy faith ; and very affecting is the sight when (as is not uncommon) the husband and wife present themselves and their children to receive, as a family, the seal of the covenant of God.

The Native Philanthropic Society is only one of several institutions that have been formed in Tinnevely for the temporal and spiritual advantage of the people ; among others, there is a Catechists' Widows' Fund, on the plan of our Benefit Societies ; a Native Tract Society, for the publishing and circulating

* A small copper coin.

original or translated tracts in Tamul ; and a Tamul Book Society for the translation of larger works. Watts' Scripture Catechism has just been completed and published by it.

Lately the Missionaries have endeavoured to arouse the native energies by establishing half-yearly prizes among the catechists for the best Essays upon some given subject. Two distributions have taken place, and the Missionaries have been unexpectedly gratified to find both the matter and style of the compositions very superior to any thing they had expected.

In December, 1840, Mr. Pettitt was one day agreeably surprised by an invitation to attend a meeting among the natives at Asirvadapooram, a Christian village in his district, for the formation of a "*Church Building Fund*." The idea had originated with the Inspecting Catechist, formerly a Maraver, who had talked it over with his friends, and finding much encouragement, proposed it to the Missionary. You may suppose it was gladly listened to. Mr. Pettitt attended the meeting ; about ten Catechists and from forty to fifty headmen from various villages were present ; rules were drawn up, and a liberal sum subscribed on the spot. The principle of the Society is, that every person capable of working, is to give the best day's income of the whole year to the fund with as much more as he pleases. Their first church has already risen, a small and simple structure, but

substantially built, and capable of containing 100 persons. It is in the village of Tahthenkullam, and was opened for Divine service by the Rev. G. Pettitt, the Rev. J. Thomas, and the Rev. J. Devasagayam, on June 1st, 1842.*

The neighbouring districts of Sâtankullam and Meignânapurum soon followed the example set them at Asirvadapooram ; similar societies were established there, and a branch one formed at Kadâtchapuram. The subject appears to have taken deep root in the minds of the people ; and though we well know that a desire to promote the erection of churches may exist without vital godliness ; yet situated as these poor people are, it is a good token of their sincerity and earnest desire for the means of grace.

May God bestow a blessing upon every means used according to His word and will for the improvement of these our brethren, distant indeed in space, but united to us by the bond of fellowship in Christ Jesus our common Lord.

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

* On the first Anniversary Meeting of this Society in December, 1841, there were 300 persons present, all of whom appeared much interested. It was held in the open air, and Mr. Pettitt observed from fifteen to twenty Heathens sitting under a neighbouring tree listening very attentively, and saw them afterwards put a few pice into the collecting box.

LETTER X.

MY DEAR LUCY,

DID it ever occur to you how much of our present knowledge we owe to India? She is now so sunk in ignorance that we can scarcely believe how brightly human learning once shone in her; and often forget that the light of science we now enjoy has travelled westward to us from beyond the Indus; and yet such is the fact; as we have already seen,* society in India was organized, and in some measure civilized long before Europe was known in history; and in later times, arts and science flourished there, when England, now her mistress, was, if inhabited at all, the abode of painted savages.

Besides much that is less clearly traced, we know that our present mode of numbering, and the elements of algebra came from India, through Persia and Arabia—their astronomical observations were accurate and laborious; and they were at an early period proficient in mental arithmetic.† But the mental

* Part I. Letter 3.

† It is worthy of remark, that time in India has been from the remotest ages reckoned by *weeks*, and that the beginning and end of their weeks correspond to ours.—But

superiority of India soon waned ; poetry and history continued the longest above the horizon, but the latter was so mixed with fable, that it is more romance than a genuine chronicle of facts.

But when India is spoken of as being sunk in ignorance, you must not suppose that her people are in a state of unlettered barbarism. Their degrading idolatry has indeed perverted every principle of true science, yet there are still learned men among them ; and throughout all classes, the men, generally speaking it is a still more curious fact, that in the Tamul language (perhaps also in the others) the different days are named after the same heavenly bodies, and in the same order as in the western world, as the following will show :—

<i>English.</i>	<i>French.</i>	<i>Tamul.</i>	<i>from</i>
Sunday,	—	Naettuk- kerāmi	{ Naeru, the Sun
Monday,	Lundi	Thingul- kerāmi	{ Thingul, the Moon
Tuesday, (from Tuesco } the Saxon Mars) }	Mardi	Sevvaik- kerāmi	{ Sevvai, Mars.
Wednesday, (Woden } the Saxon Mercury. }	Mercredi	Buthan- kerāmi	{ Buthan, Mercury.
Thursday, (Thor, or } Jupiter.) }	Jeudi	Veyālak- kerāmi	{ Veyālām Jupiter.
Friday, (Freya, or } Venus.) }	Vendredi	Vellik- kerāmi	{ Velli, Venus.
Saturday,	Samedi	Sānekke- rāmi	{ Sānē, Saturn.

If it is the same in other countries and languages, would it not lead to the idea that some measure of homage was possibly paid to them before the confusion of tongues ?

ing, can read and write, and know something of arithmetic. Their minds are so quick, intelligent, and eager, that they easily acquire whatever they are taught, but their characters are deficient in stability and firmness, and require a steady mental culture and moral discipline, which has hitherto been scarcely attempted. The friends of missions are everywhere becoming increasingly alive to this, and anxious to promote education on a broader and firmer basis; but want of pecuniary means prevents the Church Missionary Society from taking the more effectual measures it has for some time contemplated.

At present, education in Tinnevely is nearly confined to the day schools in the Christian villages, some of which have a master of their own, and some are under the care of the Catechist. The most promising lads in these day schools are taken out and placed in the Seminary at Palamcottah, where they receive a better education; and it is pleasant to know that one of the former pupils, who was afterwards for two or three years in Bishop Corrie's grammar school at Madras, is now the master, under the superintendence of the Rev. S. Hobbs, and discharges his duty very satisfactorily. From the Seminary a further selection is made of young men who are prepared by the Missionaries* to act as future Catechists in the different districts.

But besides the schools in *Christian* villages, the

* These are called "Preparandi classes."

Church Missionary Society has established a few here and there in villages wholly *heathen*. These have been undertaken at the urgent request of the people, on the condition that they shall be entirely under the control of the Missionary, and that no rules shall be adopted, no books used, but with his express sanction. So that though the master and scholars are heathens, the instruction is Christian; their own books, with their heathen dedications are excluded; and while writing and arithmetic are not forgotten, the chief employment is the reading and learning our Holy Scriptures, and elementary religious books.

There is something affecting in the inscriptions on the native heathen school books. They are generally inscribed to Ganesa,* but sometimes to the superior deities; and the following is the translation of the lines on the outside olei of one that was sent home to us. At the one end is written "OM†—may my teacher flourish." "Thou my teacher be my assistance."—At the other end,

"The Divine Will is strength,
Devi be my help,
Oh, priest be my assistance,
Râm be victorious."

But we will accompany the Missionary to a heathen

* The God of wisdom.—See Part I., Letter 3.

† OM is the sacred name which they never pronounce.

village, in which one of these Christian schools is established. As you pass along the street, you will be struck with the difference that appears between this and the Christian village you before visited. There is a want of cleanliness and order in the arrangement of the little dwellings ; and on either side your eye will catch some token of their heathen state. On one side perhaps you will observe a hideous human figure erected in the front of an unfinished house ;—it has been placed there by the owner, in the hope, that if an “*evil eye*” should turn that way, it may be arrested by the frightful object, and prevented from passing on to the building itself. Bunches of *margosa* leaves will perhaps also be hanging across the street, or before the dwellings ; either to prevent the demon of the small pox from entering, or sometimes to keep off other evil spirits, by making them suppose the disease is already there.

The women run away to hide themselves, and while your eye mourns to trace the outward signs of idolatry and delusion, your heart will feel the absence of the joyful welcome of the Christian villages.

The Missionary is however always received with respect, and the school is so great an object of interest to the people, that should the room in which it is usually kept be a small one, he will probably be invited to hold his examination of it in the Pagoda.

Let us enter with him and witness the ark of the

Lord, brought, as it were, into the temple of Dagon, and the praises of God perfected in the presence of the senseless idols who usurp His right.

Striking and touching is the scene—the fathers of the children and some of their friends assemble, and sitting round in perfect silence on the ground, evince the greatest interest in the proceedings. They do not offer the slightest interruption, except that sometimes an old man, unable to restrain his admiration and delight at the cleverness and attainments of the boys, will burst out in some sudden exclamation of praise and pleasure.

There is no difficulty in inducing the boys to answer ; the difficulty is to restrain their eagerness ; and, unless one individual is particularly pointed out, and it is desired that he alone will reply, the lips of a whole school will be opened to declare that “there is but one God,” that “Jesus is the Son of God,” that “He died on the cross to save sinners,” that “sin entered into the world by Adam’s eating the forbidden fruit ;” and, in short, all the leading parts and doctrines of our faith will be thus freely and fully acknowledged. Nor does the Missionary hesitate to turn to the idols close to which he may be sitting, and personally to bring the truth home to their own consciences, by asking, “Are these idols God ?” “Can they save you ?” “What are they ?” Nor do the children shrink from answering, nor do the parents object to this condemnation of their own errors.

After the examination, rewards are distributed,—pens, or pencils, or books ; and it is an encouraging fact, that when permitted to choose, they always fix on the *last*,—Christian books being preferred even to the inviting present of a steel pen. It was not always so, for formerly boys of caste shrunk from the defiling touch of a piece of leather, but now they eagerly desire *bound* books, and the frequent cry is, “Give me a book, a *bound* book.”

The native boys have very retentive memories, as well as great quickness of apprehension, and it is surprising how much they often know by heart. A friend told me of a boy in one of these heathen schools, who repeated correctly the whole of the epistle to the Romans, the “Tamul Historical Catechism,” and all Mr. Rhenius’ “Doctrinal Catechism with Scripture references ;” the last alone containing about sixty octavo pages ; and this he spoke of as no uncommon case.

Many of the boys thus taught have, notwithstanding their knowledge, continued heathens, but in some among them, (thanks be to God,) the word of life has taken root in their hearts ; they have come out from their idolatry, and publicly professed Christianity. Some of the heathen masters here also have, like Chedumbrum* of Valanganam, been led in a path which they knew not, and have themselves been brought to God by the truths they taught to others.

* Part I., Letter 15.

I was very much interested in the account of a youth who had been educated in one of these village schools, and who died three or four years ago in the faith and fear of God, and as I am sure you will be interested too, I shall tell you a little about him.

Sattianadan was the son of the Nadan, or headman of the village of Kuppapuram, where part of the inhabitants had some time before applied for Christian instruction, and had had a Catechist sent to them and a school established. Most of the people still continued decided idolaters, but the father of Sattianadan seems, at the time I am speaking of, to have been halting between two opinions : desirous of instruction, but clinging to his former errors. But not so the son ; the seed sown in the school fell on good ground, and though for a time there was no appearance of its having taken root, yet at last it sprung up and bore fruit abundantly.

The first instance of his showing any zeal for the honour of God, was his destruction of some of the pei-coils in and near the village. Several of these he visited, and had levelled the consecrated mounds, taking off and tearing to pieces the garlands that the deluded worshippers would bring at midnight and hang upon them. After this he was taken seriously ill, and his heathen relations remonstrated with him on his conduct, attributing his present illness to the anger of the evil spirits whom he had offended by

thus demolishing their altars, and they offered to propitiate them on his behalf. This proposal he indignantly rejected, declaring that so far from his principles having been shaken by his illness, he would, if he had strength, continue to destroy as many as he could find. So universally beloved and respected was he in the village, and so consistent had been his general conduct, that even so public a testimony as he had borne against their devil worship does not appear to have produced any personal unkindness towards himself. He had been ill for some months, when the Rev. J. Devasagayam came to the village in one of his periodical excursions, (in August, 1838), and went to see him. He found him lying on a bed very ill, but, on speaking and praying with him, found in him, he says, "a filial confidence towards God." As he was leaving the village the next morning to proceed on his journey, the Catechist, Paul, came running to him, saying, "Sir, what a remarkable thing I have just witnessed, Sattianadan, the son of the headman, is exhorting his parents and friends to cleave to Jesus, and says that he is going to the right hand of God." The Missionary immediately proceeded to the little prayer-house, where, for the last two months, the poor youth had at his own earnest request, been permitted to spend his days and nights, and found him sitting on a cot exhorting his parents and friends in a very solemn manner, saying, "Hear

the word of God," "learn the word of God," "do not despise or forget it." "I tell you this three times, five times, and fifty times." The Rev. J. Devasagayam goes on to say, "This he repeated frequently, adding some other subjects in the interval; saying 'I go to the right hand of God. I have committed many sins you do not know, but the Lord has been very merciful to me.' Considering his great weakness, we were exceedingly surprised to see him speak so loudly and constantly. His father gave him a little water frequently, which he sometimes refused, as he told us the subject was so important that he would not be hindered by attending to his bodily comfort, which would soon perish. He first addressed his own father, who was crying at the prospect of losing his son, and told him not to lament for him, as he was going to a happy place, and that he made his spirit heavy by sorrowing for him, and then after kissing his father's hand, he took leave of him.

"He then addressed the Catechist, and desired him to suffer no one to weep for him after his death, but to read good hymns and to *bury* him. Looking at him, he said, 'You, Catechists, be active, and go from one village to another, and preach Christ to them. See how ministers, (meaning the Missionaries,) come so far from the English country.' Looking at me, he said, 'You, ministers, do not spare money, do not keep it in the box, but spend it all for the cause of

Christ.' Seeing the father of one of the youths who is gone to Madras to the grammar school, he said, 'Don't be sorry that your son is gone so far ; he is gone there to come to the place where I am now going.' To all the women he said, 'Remember Martha and Mary, and do not be like Martha, but be like Mary.' He saw a heathen man and woman, and told them to hear and learn the word of God. He also said, 'There are some families in this village who do not like to hear the word of God, but they will be ruined.' He then spoke of the blessings of Christ's salvation, and closed with referring to the last judgment-seat of Christ, and how necessary it was to give up our account to Him who shall be the judge of quick and dead. When he was not able to speak more he repeated slowly, 'Jesus ! Jesus.' I offered up a prayer, and commended his spirit into the hands of our blessed Jesus, who gave him strength to bear witness to his glory. He repeated with me the Lord's prayer, and coming to the fourth petition, he exclaimed that his soul was in the sky."

After this he sunk down quite exhausted ; and all present thought that his soul had indeed fled to the sky. But his work was not yet done—the next day he revived, and God preserved him for several weeks that he might be more fully ripened for the heavenly garner. The Rev. J. Devasagayam was obliged to leave him the next day, and no Missionary was able

to visit Kuppapuram again till the end of October, when the Rev. H. Harley found him still alive, but increasingly weak and ill. He baptized him, but it was with great difficulty he could make the responses in the baptismal service, and soon after Mr. Harley's visit his spirit left its earthly tabernacle.

Mr. Harley, when writing about him, says, "I could not help feeling what I have heard and seen with regard to this youth as an encouragement to go on *sowing the seed*. He does not appear to have been converted suddenly, but gradually ; and all he knew he had learnt in the school in the village, which the Holy Spirit has blessed to his spiritual good. What thanks do we owe to God for such a vessel of mercy. O, may He deign by his blessed Spirit to lead many others to the same fountain of salvation which this youth found. To Him alone be ascribed all the glory."

I remain,

My dear Lucy,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER XI.

MY DEAR LUCY,

I SHOULD like to take you from village to village throughout the six districts occupied by our Society in Tinnevelly, that while we listened to their short and simple annals, we might obtain a clearer view of the work of grace, God is carrying on in each of them. This, of course, is impossible, but it will, I think, help you to form a fair idea of the general state, if I take one separate district, and enter a little more into the details of its congregations.

I have fixed on the *Northern*, not that the prospect there is brighter, or perhaps so bright as in the others, but the lights and shades seem to me more distinct, and presenting better subjects for my sketch.

This is a very large district, and extends more than seventy miles from north to south, and fifty from east to west, besides an isolated congregation at *Cumbum*, of which I will tell you afterwards.

The villages in this district, now amounting to ninety-eight, have long been under the care of the Rev. P. P. Schaffter, but the want of a house prevented him, for several years, from residing among them.

Lately one has been built, and in July, 1841, Mr. and Mrs. Schaffter removed to their new abode at *Nalloor*, a pretty spot, surrounded with tamarind trees, and half way between Palamcottah and Courtallam. But they were not permitted long to enjoy this pleasant situation; sixteen years residence in India had seriously affected Mr. Schaffter's health, and he has been obliged to visit Europe, in the hope that his native air may speedily restore it, and enable him to return to his beloved flocks in Tinnevely, who, during his absence, are under the charge of the Rev. Stephen Hobbs.

As in all the other districts, Mr. Schaffter has had cause for joy and sorrow, for hope and fear, in the people under his care. A great number of souls are, he is persuaded, under the teaching of the Holy Spirit, and have real faith in the Lord Jesus, while they endeavour in all outward things to walk worthy of their high calling. But he has to mourn over the unsatisfactory state of many others, of whom it is difficult to say whether they belong to Christ or to the world. They learn the word of God as others do, and some appear to learn it with pleasure; their conduct is quiet and regular, yet they conform in too many respects to the evil customs and practices around them, and show little anxiety for growth in grace.

There is besides, a third class, of whom he speaks as

“evidently still entire strangers to real piety, their conduct testifying too clearly that they are still the slaves of their old master.” “Some bond,” he adds, “though not the right one, keeps them with us, nor do I find it my duty to separate them, except for well attested acts of immorality ; their keeping with us may still be a means in the Lord’s hands, of reclaiming them.”

There has been, in some of the congregations, a great difficulty in persuading the people to give up their heathen ceremonies at their marriages and funerals. Many of these ceremonies are *in themselves* harmless, and would be matters of comparative indifference, were it not that the adherence to them, and the reliance placed upon them are symptoms of the people’s hearts still clinging, if not to actual idolatry, yet to those outward observances which make up so large a portion of heathen worship. It requires much of “that wisdom which is from above” in dealing with cases of this kind ; for, as all the ceremonies on such occasions are according to the rules of caste, the omission of any of them is considered as a failure of duty ; and before a man can be content to lose the good opinions of his friends and neighbours and to give up the established customs of his forefathers, he must have been endued with such a strength of faith, as makes “the reproach of Christ” more precious to him than “all the treasures of Egypt.”

The Missionaries however find it necessary firmly, though gently, to exclude from the congregations any individuals who persist in adhering to these customs, or who in any other way return to heathen habits ; and if a whole congregation should thus offend, they withdraw the Catechist, and deprive them of the outward means of grace. These poor people generally consider this as the greatest misfortune that can befall them, and in several instances the punishment has been attended with the most beneficial effects, and has brought them to a deeper and more serious consideration of the whole subject.

Mr. Schaffter's journals occasionally relate instances of these fearful backslidings, not unmingled however with bright displays of a moral courage which might put to shame our own lukewarmness in confessing Christ before men. One of these occurred in a visit he lately paid not long since to the village of *Kovil-ankullam*. There had formerly been a considerable congregation here, but all had gone back to heathenism except one family. The father, who is in respectable circumstances, was baptised sometime ago, and stood firm when all around fell away. His wife too had given good evidence of sincere belief in Christ, and on this occasion exhibited a decision of character seldom met with in a native woman. While Mr. Schaffter was conversing with a number of her heathen relations and neighbours, she came forward

before them all, and in a half reproachful tone, inquired of him why he delayed to baptize her. "Four years ago, she exclaimed, I asked Mr. Rhenius to baptize me, but he advised me to wait a little longer, as I was not sufficiently instructed ; ever since I have been learning and waiting, month after month, requesting the Catechist to beseech you to come and baptize me ; but to this day I remain unbaptized." Mr. Schaffter asked her if she had well considered the difficulties and inconveniences to which she would subject herself and her children ; representing to her how much it would be against all their worldly interests ; reminding her that there was not a person under Christian instruction for ten miles round ; and laying before her the ridicule and contempt to which she and they would be exposed. "Oh, sir," she earnestly replied, "do you still doubt me ? Have I not suffered all these things for many years, but have I on that account shown a double mind, or any desire to go back to the world ?" The appeal was irresistible, and after examining her on the essential doctrines of Christianity and the ground of her faith, Mr. Schaffter baptised her and her eldest son, 17 years of age, before them all ; while she, unmoved by the heathens around her, received the holy rite with ejaculations of prayer and thanksgiving. These visits to distant congregations always present a chequered scene of pain and pleasure.

At *Parankondapooram* the Missionary was distressed by finding that half the people had gone back to heathenism, and that the greater part of the remainder had become cold and indifferent ; while at the next, *Aladeipetty*, where, on his preceding visit, though some of the people had taken great pains in learning, there had appeared no desire for baptism, he was now cheered by a few coming forward, whom, after due examination, he baptized.

In Tinnevely, and I believe generally in our missionary stations, a desire for baptism is one of the strongest proofs of a person's sincerity and determination to persevere in his profession of Christianity ; and it is an encouraging fact, that in this, as well as the other districts, there is very rarely an instance of a baptized person returning to heathenism—the backsliders are from among those who are only under instruction. •

At *Elandakullam* a faithful few requested him to administer the Lord's supper to them, to which he replied that he intended to do so on the following Sunday at a village six miles off, and invited them to attend. " Oh yes," cried out an old man between 90 and 100 years of age, resting both his hands upon his staff, " with the help of God I shall come slowly, and enjoy it once more." Affected by the old man's earnestness, and unwilling to put him to so much fatigue and inconvenience, the Missionary determined,

small as the number was, (only six,) to administer it there, and it proved a season of refreshing to his own soul. This old man, whose name is Royappen, was the very first in this part of the country, who, in the time of Schwartz, renounced popery, and embraced the Gospel. He can neither read nor write, but in his younger days he composed many hymns which are still sung with delight by himself, and his younger Christian brethren, and have furnished many a Catechist with a successful weapon against their heathen and popish enemies.*

At another village, *Neelianalloor*, there is only one Christian family among all the heathen, but the history of the father is so encouraging that I am sure you will like to hear it. When very young, he was employed in the service of some native Christians, who endeavoured to instil into his mind the principles

* There are a great many Roman Catholics in this part of Tinnevely, but, except in name, they are not to be distinguished from the heathen. Their festivals and their ceremonies correspond; the same kind of cars are used in their processions; their foreheads are alike disfigured with the ashes of Siva; and the images of Kali or of Vishnoo have only given way to those of the Virgin Mary or St. Francis Xavier. The Scriptures are forbidden to be read, though some, more in earnest than the rest, have ventured to disobey this injunction; they have inquired for themselves, and the result has been that not less than six hundred have joined the various congregations in the northern district.

of Christianity. His heathen parents, perceiving that he was in some degree influenced by their instructions, took him away ; and by marrying him to a heathen young woman, and by other means, succeeded in alienating his heart from the truths he had begun to love. For fifteen years he continued an avowed heathen, though not without many a secret struggle, and many a striving of the Holy Spirit in his heart. At last, about five years ago, his convictions became deeper and stronger ; he embraced Christianity with his whole heart, and from that time has been, as Lot in Sodom, alone, and a stranger among the people of his own village. For a long time he had also to endure the opposition of his wife, but she has lately appeared much altered, and has begun herself to learn the word of God. As yet, however, she will not consent to the baptism of their son, though the boy himself much wishes it.

At *Trevarpetty* Mr. Schaffter met one of the nicest congregations he had ever seen. It was the first time a Missionary had been among them, and the great joy they manifested at his arrival, the eager desire they showed to hear the word of God, and their kindness towards each other, (for they belonged to three different castes) all persuaded him that religion was with them something more than a name. In the evening he had a meeting with them, which was prolonged late into the night, he baptized eight of

their number, and rejoiced at the seriousness and joy with which they received the holy ordinance. The next morning he rose before four o'clock, to proceed on his way; but to his surprise found the people up before him, and waiting before the Church to receive a little more of the bread of life. So he prayed with them, and went on his way rejoicing. He found afterwards that these early prayers were no new thing, for that during the season when their work obliges them to go out early, they will wake the Catechist at four o'clock, or even earlier, that he may have prayer with them before they set out.

At two of the neighbouring villages the persecutions of the Zemindâr had sadly reduced the congregations, but at another, he found that the Gospel had apparently touched the hearts of two little heathen boys, for they had refused to worship at an idol feast in their village, and though the younger was at last prevailed upon by stripes, nothing could induce the elder one to yield.

I scarcely know where to stop in these little histories, for I shall weary you if I continue them; so I will relate one more anecdote, and then bring this letter to a close.

At the village of *Sanbagapooram*, the headman, his wife and sister, and several of the respectable people in the place are Christians, and the work of grace began among them under rather remarkable

circumstances. It appears that long before she had heard any thing of Christianity, the wife had of her own accord renounced idolatry, from some vague conviction of its sinfulness. For ten years it pleased God to keep her in this half awakened state, but when at last the old Catechist, Abraham, was sent by Mr. Rhenius to this village, the light broke in upon her soul, she felt the Gospel was what her spirit had been unconsciously "feeling after," and her sister and herself determined to embrace it. Earnest were their prayers that God would open to them a way through the difficulties which surrounded them ; He vouchsafed them an answer of peace, and disposed the heart, not only of the husband, but of many of their relations to unite with them in turning from dumb idols to serve the living God. Since that time they have proved consistent and zealous servants of their Lord, and the wife in particular is so much respected by all her neighbours, that no heathen will ever open his mouth against Christianity when she is present.

But now my dear Lucy, according to my promise, I will conclude, only begging you to believe me,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER XII.

THANKFULLY indeed, my dear LUCY, may we rejoice that congregations have been formed in so many villages in this Northern district of Nalloor; yet you must remember these are but like glow-worms "beneath the hedge or near the stream," bright indeed in themselves, and brightening a little circle round them, but unable to dispel the general gloom of a dark and cloudy night. They are scattered here and there amid a dense population still entirely heathen, and many a painful feeling arises in the breast of the Missionary, when as he journeys from one congregation to another, he sees the gopurum rearing its lofty head above the trees; or hears the idol music of many a town and village, which has perhaps never yet been visited even by a Catechist. With these sights and sounds continually before them, who can wonder that the friends of missions so often turn to England, and so earnestly implore our Church to lengthen her cords, and to send out a more effectual supply of help. There are, however, a few native labourers, (distinct from the Catechists who are stationary in their different congregations,) whose special work it is to endeavour

to penetrate this fearful darkness, and to scatter a few sparks of heavenly light throughout the country. They are employed and supported by a Society, called the "Pilgrim Society," which sprung up five or six years ago, among the people themselves, without the knowledge or assistance of any of the Missionaries. I cannot give you a better account of its origin than in the words of a native Catechist. "One Sunday, our pastor, Rhenius, in the course of an affecting Sermon on Rom. viii. 32, took occasion to ask us : The Lord has shown you His love in a wonderful manner, but you, dear brethren, what have you done for Him in proof of your gratitude ?" He added many other things calculated to make us feel our spiritual barrenness, and the duties which the love of God imposes on us. On coming out of the Church, we assembled together to consider the matter more closely. We felt we were less than unprofitable servants ; and that it was our duty to glorify by our actions Him who had done so much for us. At last we resolved to form a little society among ourselves, to send the messengers of peace into the towns and villages in the northern part of our province, into which the light of the gospel had not yet penetrated, and where all the inhabitants were still in the darkness of heathenism. We named it the "Pilgrim Society," and by the means of the little offerings we brought, we soon, by the blessing of God, found ourselves able to send out

two messengers who travelled unceasingly among the most obscure and distant places, declaring the word of God, and distributing tracts and the Holy Scriptures. Dear fathers and brethren in Christ, we implore your aid in this important work ; assist us by your contributions and your prayers, that we may be able to send forth a larger number of these heralds of peace."

I find from Mr. Schaffter that the people have from the beginning continued to support these two entirely from their own resources, and that by the liberality of private friends he has himself been enabled to increase the number. At present, he has only four additional labourers, but at one time he was able to employ as many as thirteen, whom he sent out two and two, an elder and a younger, on this pilgrimage of love and mercy.

These readers travel far and wide, even towards Madura and Dindigul, carrying the message of God to many an ear on which it never fell before ; and though the amount of good they have been the means of doing can never be known till the day when all things shall be revealed, yet the servant of God has not been left without some present hopeful signs. In a few instances the readers have been ill-treated, and the books they have given away have been collected and torn to pieces, but in general they have been kindly received, and allowed to tell their errand un-

molested. In several places a spirit of inquiry has been awakened ; and one family in particular has embraced Christianity, who never heard the gospel but from their lips. The natural acuteness of the native mind gives these men, in their arguments with their heathen opposers, a readiness we should hardly expect from persons who have had so few advantages of education ; and Mr. Schaffter mentioned some conversations at which he had accidentally been present, where he had been struck with the aptness of their illustrations. One of these, which I select on account of its brevity, was in answer to a heathen who, in a cavilling spirit, inquired how he could know the Christian religion was better than heathenism. "If I bring you two dishes of plantains," asked the reader, "how do you know which is the best?" "Of course by tasting them," was the answer. "Just so, I have known by *tasting*, for I was a heathen and am now a Christian,—do you also taste and see."

But before I leave the northern district, I must fulfil my promise of telling you more about "Cum-bum." This little village is in the province of Dindigul, beyond the mountains on the north-west of Tinnevely, 150 miles from Nalloor, the nearest Missionary station, and seventy or eighty from any of our congregations. But when God has a design of mercy, neither mountains nor seas, nor distance, nor difficulties can arrest the progress of His word. It

seems that eleven or twelve years ago, the people of Cumbum hearing a rumour of the Gospel from some Christians who happened to go there on some other business, sent to request Mr. Rhenius to place a Catechist among them. He did so, but though the Catechist had from time to time made a favourable report of them, no Missionary had ever been able to go there, till Mr. Schaffter, unwilling to leave Tinnevely without knowing something of a people who, though long under his charge, he had never seen, determined, in company with Mr. Hobbs, to pay them a visit. They set out on horseback, and after a fatiguing journey of five days, reached the spot. They found it situated in a beautiful valley, a clear river flowing through it, while many a little stream and gushing torrent descended from the mountains that shut in the lovely scene; altogether reminding Mr. Schaffter of the valleys of his native Switzerland. They found the people much more simple, and less prejudiced than in Tinnevely; they were delighted to see them, and the Missionaries, on their part, rejoiced over the fruits of the very imperfect culture they had received. The Catechist had evidently taken great pains with them, he had a school for the boys, and the people were better instructed than could have been expected. They had built a little house of prayer, and all were anxious to be baptized. The Missionaries however thought

it better that the greater part should wait, and only baptized thirty-six, who had made the greatest progress. There were four or five other villages in this valley, and in two of them little congregations had also been formed. The Missionaries wished very much to have visited them, but they had no time to spare, and they could only ardently desire that a Missionary could have been specially appointed to this promising field of labour.

Finding there was a shorter road across the mountains, they prepared to return by it, but the people of the place endeavoured to dissuade them by representing the difficulties and dangers to which they would be exposed. Thinking that these difficulties were probably over-rated, and anxious to get back as soon as possible, they persevered in their intention, and set out early in the morning, accompanied by a party of the kind hearted villagers, who, since they could not dissuade them from their purpose, would not let them go alone. For some hours all went on smoothly, but early in the afternoon a heavy rain came on, the way had become so steep that they were obliged to dismount and walk : all traces of a road had disappeared ; and the only paths through the long tangled grass, that was sometimes higher than their heads, were the tracks of the wild elephants, who roam at large among these their native hills. They several times saw these fierce creatures at a

distance, but happily none came near enough to cause them any serious apprehensions.

I know not, however, what they would have done without one of the party who had come with them from the village—he was a hunter, well acquainted with the country, and his stern immoveable features bore the impress of a mind that knew no fear. Encouraged by his report of a hut built in a tree,* where they could safely pass the night ; they laboured on for four or five hours, though almost exhausted with fatigue and hunger, and completely drenched, not only by the rain, but by having repeatedly to wade through a mountain torrent of considerable depth, that crossed their course. Evening had set in before they reached the spot, but you may imagine their disappointment at finding the hut, which had been made of reeds, had fallen to pieces.

No one knew what was to be done, till the friendly hunter remembered that some way further on there was a rock, which, as it was free from the tall grass that everywhere covered the ground, would afford them a place of rest. Another hour's toil brought them to it, their companions lighted fires round them to keep off the wild beasts that infest the hills

* These huts are often met with, and are built by hunters, to secure themselves from the wild beasts that infest the mountains. The branches of the tree are cut, so as to form a kind of ladder.

—contrived a sort of tent to shelter the Missionaries, and after partaking of some honey and coarse grain, the first food they had tasted since they left the village, they all lay down till morning.

At day-break, they renewed their journey, and though it was still difficult and fatiguing, they met with no serious obstacle till they came to a river, which having worn itself a channel through the rocks, had left only a narrow path between itself and the perpendicular cliffs on either side. In general, this path, though narrow, was not unsafe, but the rain of the preceding day had now so swelled the stream, that it filled the pass, and for two or three hundred yards there only remained a mere ledge along the face of the rock. But they had no alternative, and though the slightest false step would have precipitated them into the stream, they ventured round the dangerous point, and by the good providence of God, escaped all accidents. Their horses swam by their side along the stream, and after bidding adieu to their Cumbum friends, they once more descended into the plains of Tinnevely.

A little incident that occurred before they reached the plains, is so characteristic that I must repeat it. They were totally unacquainted with the country, but the keen demands of hunger had again assailed them ; and having no provisions with them, they

rode up to a house which evidently belonged to a person of property, where they hoped to procure some food. The owner was from home, but his wife, as soon as she knew their errand, though probably she had never before seen an European, received them with the greatest courtesy. Of course they could not be admitted within the house, but she invited them to rest themselves under a tree, while some refreshment should be prepared for them, and they were soon supplied with the best the house afforded, the mistress attending on them to see that they wanted nothing. When they had finished this welcome meal, they rose to take leave, and cordially thanking her for the reception she had given to such entire strangers, begged her to accept some remuneration. This she steadily refused, and expressed her pleasure at having had the opportunity of rendering them this slight service, adding in a strain truly Oriental, "I am at a loss to conceive what act of virtue I can have performed in a previous state of existence, that can have entitled me to so great an honour in this present life!"

Do you think the most finished European courtier could vie with this untaught heathen woman, in the art of complimenting?

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER XIII.



PLANTAIN IN FRUIT.

MY DEAR LUCY,

THE custom of early marriages, and still earlier betrothments, is a source of much evil and misery to the female population throughout India. When a girl is eight or nine years old, and sometimes much sooner, she is betrothed to a boy a few years older

than herself, whom perhaps she has never seen ; and from that time she is considered as his wife. At the age of thirteen or fourteen she is married, and henceforth becomes little more than a domestic slave. "She may not walk with her husband, but behind him ; she may not eat with, but after him, and of what he leaves ; she ought not to sleep till he is asleep, nor to remain asleep when he is awake, and if she is sitting when he comes in, she must rise. She should have no god on earth but her husband—him she should worship while he lives, and if he dies she is doomed to perpetual widowhood."* This doom is hers, even if the young man dies between the betrothment and the marriage ; a black cord is fastened round her neck never to be removed, and the poor child is for ever shut out from scenes of gladness. The sports of childhood are denied her, she must never again be present at any season of rejoicing, she is treated as an inferior by her own family, must wear the coarsest garments, and eat but once a day of the coarsest food. Thus neglected and despised, with no interest in this life, and no hope for the future, it is no wonder that these poor girls often throw off all restraint, and abandon themselves to open sin.

The state of the Shânar women in Tinnevely is

* Among other bonds from which Baboo Dwarganauth Tagore, (of Calcutta), has endeavoured to free his countrymen, this of perpetual widowhood is one ; and he is still aiming at it.

not quite so bad as in most other parts of India, they are generally industrious and contented, faithful to their husbands, and fond of their children; but accustomed as they are from childhood to the horrid scenes of the Pei-arâdanai, their minds are degraded, and their general moral principle extremely low. Mr. Blackman and Mr. Schaffter have both assured me, that those who by living long and familiarly among the natives, have become well acquainted with the evils of a heathen education and of the early intercourse with heathens, to which even the children of Christians are subjected, can alone duly estimate the blessing of a truly pious well-educated mother; and it is this that makes female education of such great importance to a mission.

The subject had from the first been a source of anxiety to the Missionaries in Tinnevely, but the usual prejudices against it prevented them from being able to take any steps; till in the early part of 1823, they were agreeably surprised by a boy in the school at Palamcottah begging for a spelling-book for his sister, whom he was teaching to read, and who already knew some of her letters. Encouraged by this, and two or three similar requests, a girls' school was established in the mission compound, and placed under the care of Mrs. Schnarré. You may imagine with what thankfulness the Missionaries looked on the thirty pleasant happy faces that were assembled

there, and rejoiced to think that these poor girls whose only instruction hitherto had been to keep caste, to make salaam, and to deceive; and whose chief encouragement had been to hear their mothers boast of the clever falsehoods they could tell, were now listening to the words of eternal truth, and learning not merely their duty in this life, but the way of everlasting salvation. Since that time, female education has slowly spread, and several schools have been established in the different districts.

I shall first tell you of those in which the girls are entirely taken into the mission compound, and are fed and clothed at the expense of Christian friends, and which for the sake of distinction I shall call "compound schools." I shall be able to give you a better idea of the subject, if I confine myself to the schools in one particular district; and as I have had the opportunity of knowing more about those of Sâtankullum than any other, I shall select these as a specimen of the rest.

When Mr. and Mrs. Blackman went to Tinnevely, in January, 1836, they resided at first at Palamcottah, and Mrs. Blackman took part with Mrs. Pettitt in the care of the girls' school there. At the end of a year, they removed to Sâtankullum, and Mrs. Blackman took with her seven of the girls, with whom she began a similar school in her new abode, and soon increased her number to thirty-five.

The school house consisted of one large airy room, with a small one at each end; one of the small ones was used as a store-room and cook-room; and in the other their books and spinning wheels were kept. The larger room was used, not only as a school-room, but as an eating and sleeping room; for the simple habits of the natives, and the free admission of air prevents the discomfort which would attend such an arrangement in England. The girls rose at half-past five, and after the time allotted them for private prayer, washing, arranging their cloths, rolling up their sleeping mats, &c., proceeded to the work of the day. As Mrs. Blackman was anxious that while receiving instruction of a higher kind, they should be fitted for the duties of their stations, the first part of the morning was spent in beating rice and carrying water. You would like to have seen the busy group, each with her earthen chatty on her hip; and the elder ones with a vessel made of the palmyra leaf, to which they tied a string, and letting it down into the water, filled their own chatties, and those of their younger schoolfellows.

One morning, very early, as Mrs. Blackman was dressing, she heard singing under her window, and looking through the Venetians, saw one of her little scholars, about ten years old, who had dressed more quickly than the rest, passing along with her chatty on her side, singing one of the Tamul hymns she had

lately learnt. When she reached the well, she sat down on the low wall that surrounds it, and unconscious of being observed, her little joyous heart poured forth one hymn after another, half saying, half singing them, till her companions joined her, and the bustle of drawing water stopped the pleasant strains.

At eight o'clock, they were summoned to morning prayer, and scripture reading—then came their breakfast, generally consisting of "conjee," or rice gruel, except in the palmyra season, when they were sometimes indulged with "puttaneer."

From nine to one, were the morning school hours, when they received instruction from a master; (for as yet the women are not equal to the entire care of a school) and Mrs. Blackman often taught the first and second classes herself. During these hours they were taught spelling, reading, writing, and arithmetic. For the two last they did not require slates or pencils, or copy books. Sitting down on the ground, they would strew sand before them, and smoothing it with their hands, the younger ones would trace on it the letters, or the figures with their fingers; while the older ones would write their copies, or do their sums on oleis, as I described to you before.*

At one, they dined, generally on curry and rice, that is, rice mixed with various vegetables, and

* Part I., Letter 9.

flavoured with curry-stuff, and sometimes in the proper season, they were indulged with a piece of their favourite "kuripekutti" and oil cake.

The afternoons, from three to five, were spent by the whole school with Mrs. Blackman, in the verandah; and many a pleasant and profitable hour has thus been passed. As they sat on the ground before her, she would teach them to work, or would read to them some English book into Tamul, or would talk of other countries, and of former times; endeavouring in all her intercourse with them, to store their minds with sound views and right principles. It is a peculiar trait in native children that they will converse with their superiors with the most entire freedom, without any boldness; and in these happy afternoons they would ask questions, and make observations, as freely as her own children would have done. The schoolmaster often made one of the party, and his intelligent inquiries gave an additional spirit to the conversation.

Sometimes the kindness of friends in England enabled Mrs. Blackman to delight her young pupils with the present of a bag of English print, or a needle-book, or a thimble, or a bodkin. All these were highly prized, and carefully preserved; but the greatest treasure was a *pair of scissors*, and happy was the girl who obtained such a valuable acquisition. There was generally a petition for a piece of

flannel to wrap them in, to keep them from rust ; about ten times as much string as was necessary was wound round them, and every time they were used, the process was gone through, of unwinding the long thread, and duly winding it round again.

At five, they were dismissed to amuse themselves : each had a little garden of her own, where they learnt to raise vegetables for their own use, and it was a great delight if they could find a bunch of plantains worth presenting to their kind benefactress. Now and then, as a great indulgence, Mrs. Blackman would take them for a walk, and if in the palmyra season, would treat them with puttaneer fresh from the tree ; and though there were no shady lanes, or flowery meadows, the children enjoyed their walk over the sandy plains, and among the stiff palmyras, as much as an English child is pleased with a visit to the retired farm, and a cup of milk, warm from the cow.

Their supper was rice and "pepper water," as it is called—that is, water in which the warm ingredients of the curry have been steeped without the vegetables. At eight, Mr. Blackman had evening prayers ; the party retired to rest, and each girl drawing her cloth over her head, and lying down on her little mat, slept soundly till the morning.

Thus peacefully and usefully the days rolled on, during the five years Mrs. Blackman remained at

Sâtankullum ; and of the elder girls who have married from the school, only one has given her cause for sorrow. All the others have proved respectable and upright young women ; and some of them have given evidence of decided piety. Several have married Catechists, and five of them have in their turn become teachers of others, and are settled in the villages as school-mistresses.

On the marriage of any of these young women, Mrs. Blackman used to present them with a marriage portion. A Bible, as you will suppose, was one of the presents, but the others were very different from those which a young woman in England would consider as suitable marriage gifts from her mistress or her teacher. A wedding cloth of rather better materials than her common one, a brass drinking vessel ; an eating vessel of the same metal, in shape like a large saucer ; a sleeping mat ; and a wooden box to hold her best cloth, her books, and the carefully preserved presents she had received at school made up the rest ; and with this stock of clothes and furniture* the bride considered herself richly endowed.

It is very encouraging to observe the marked difference there is between the cottages of the educated and uneducated young women ; for poor and bare of furniture as they all are, there is a cleanliness

* Amounting in value to about 10 Rupees, or £1.

and air of comfort about the one, entirely unknown to the other.

One of the girls who married from the Sâtankullum school, for distinction I shall call "*Sindoo*."* She was the child of Pariar parents, under Christian instruction, but as she was thirteen years old when they applied for her admission, and she had been living for some time with heathen relations, Mrs. Blackman hesitated, fearing lest she should have acquired evil habits that might injure the others. At last, however, she consented, and had cause to rejoice in her decision. Sindoo was not naturally quick, but very diligent, and no lesson seemed lost upon her; every week and every month there was a marked improvement; evidences of a real change of heart were seen in her, and at the end of a year she was baptized.†

At fifteen she was married to a Catechist in another district, and settled in a distant village, where she is still employed in instructing the women, among whom she has gained great influence by her gentle manner and consistent conduct. Her love for Mrs. Blackman continued unabated, and she never lost an oppor-

* The writer thinks it better to avoid giving the real names of these young women.

† The children of *baptized* persons are, of course, baptized in their infancy, but those whose parents are only *under instruction*, are not baptized till they can understand and appreciate the rite.

tunity of sending her a little olei of gratitude and affection.

In one of these little notes, written soon after her marriage, she spoke warmly of her own happiness, and of the kindness of her husband ; and Mrs. Blackman knowing how much she was beloved by her schoolfellows, read part of it to them. It so happened that one of them, whose parents lived near those of Sindoo, soon after returned home for a few days, and very naturally repeated what had given herself so much pleasure. Immediately the whole village was in commotion. "To think of a young woman presuming to give an opinion about her husband ! such a thing was never heard of ! and if such conduct was permitted, all would be confusion !" and poor Sindoo, on her next visit to her mother, underwent the reproaches of all her acquaintances. Their reproofs weighed heavily on her gentle spirit ; and some time after, meeting Mrs. Blackman at Palamcottah, she anxiously inquired of her, "Pray, ma'am, was I *very* wrong in telling you how much I loved my husband, and how good he was to me ?".

You will be pleased to hear that her continued propriety of conduct by degrees silenced all such objections ; and not long before Mrs. Blackman left Tinnevely, the mother came to her to express her gratitude for the instruction her daughter had received : "Madam, you do not know what a good

daughter she is to me—she does what no others think of doing after they are married, for she assists me in every way she can, and her husband and herself often send me some little present.”

Another of these young women, whose name I shall give as “*Rachel*,” had early been left an orphan by her Christian parents, and thrown on her heathen relations for support. They sadly neglected her, and when Mrs. Blackman met with her she was nearly starved. When taken into the school she improved rapidly in every respect, and being evidently under the influence of Divine grace, the seal of the covenant was not withheld, and she was baptized. She is also married to a Catechist of another district ; her husband has the charge of a small school, and when he is absent on his other duties she undertakes the teaching of the little boys.

When she heard that Mrs. Blackman was preparing to visit Europe, she came over to Sâtankullum to take leave of her, and begged permission to remain there two or three days, that she might work a sampler, to send to the ladies who had been so kind to herself and other native girls. She marked one very neatly ; and the two texts upon it, of her own choosing, were, “When my father and my mother forsake me, the Lord taketh me up ;” and “In thee the fatherless findeth mercy.”

I shall only mention one more of these young

women, and call her "*Annatje*." She is a Maraver, the grand-daughter of a good old man, who was formerly a devil dancer, and so fierce and violent that he was the terror of the neighbourhood, and his very name was used to frighten children ; but whom the sovereign grace of God has changed into a meek and devoted Christian. This girl, as being a Maraver, was of higher rank than any other in the school, as the rest were chiefly Shânars, with a few Pariars, but her grandfather's influence prevented her from assuming any undue distinction, and the effect was felt by the whole school. She has, from the first, given Mrs. Blackman much cause for joy and thankfulness ; she rapidly improved, and as her knowledge of spiritual things increased, so did also her fear of being led into temptation. Her mother is a very nice woman, and has been baptized ; but her father, though he will occasionally attend church, will sometimes absent himself for weeks together on some marauding expedition. One day when her mother came over to see her, she wished to take her back for a few days ; and though Mrs. Blackman knew that their relations and neighbours too much resembled her father to make it desirable for her to go among them, she did not think it right to refuse. She therefore merely told Annatje of her mother's wish, and was agreeably surprised by her immediately answering, "Pray Ma'am, do not let me go, I shall only get confused

in my mind if I go among so many wicked people ; my mother and one or two more desire to walk properly, but all the rest love wickedness. I hope I may be kept at school a very long time." The mother saw the force of her daughter's reasons, and left Sâtankullum without her.

Annatje is now the wife of one of the Catechists, and is usefully employed in a day school in a large village.

I will tell you of these day schools in another letter.

Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER XIV.

MY DEAR LUCY,

ALTHOUGH Mrs. Blackman had so much to encourage her in the school of which I told you in my last letter, she could not visit the distant villages without being pained at the number of wild untaught children, everywhere to be seen, who, though the daughters of Christians, could receive no instruction from their uneducated mothers, and were likely to become little better than heathens. She resolved to make the hitherto untried experiment of establishing *day schools*, and, encouraged by a little assistance from friends at Madras, she opened one in September, 1837, at Kadâtchapuram, which soon answered her most sanguine expectations. She obtained a master, and engaged as mistress a married woman, the daughter of an old Catechist, who, rising above the prejudices of his neighbours against female education, had sent her to a boys' school, where she had learnt to read. Fifty girls were soon collected, and the mornings were, and still are, spent in learning reading, writing, and cyphering, from the master. In the afternoon they are under the special charge of the mistress, who takes

them out under the shade of the trees before the school, and amidst the busy hum of the little spinning wheels, teaches them a hymn, or some portion of holy writ, or makes them repeat a simple catechism ;* while a former pupil of Mrs. Blackman's, now married to a Catechist, assists in teaching the younger ones.

Other schools were formed on the same plan, till now there are seven or eight day schools, and 250 scholars in the district of Sâtankullam. Once in the year, generally just before Christmas, Mrs. Blackman used to assemble all her little scholars at Sâtankullam for a general examination. It was always a happy day ; each girl received the present of a new cloth, and some of them had other trifling rewards. One of the best conducted of these schools is at Anbinagram, called the " Retford school," from its being in great measure indebted for its support to the clergyman of that place, and his friends. The mistress, a former pupil of Mrs. Schaffter's, is a sensible and decidedly religious young woman ; and her husband, a valuable Catechist, is much interested in female education. When Mrs. Blackman was coming away, two or three of the schoolmistresses of their own thought, wished to send a letter of acknowledgment to their kind benefactresses in England, and employed this young

* This active intelligent woman is of great use also in reading to the women of the village, visiting the sick, &c.

man to write one ; of which the following is a translation :—

“ With many salaams.”

“ This is the grateful and humble address of the mistresses who teach, and of the children who are taught in the schools at Anbinagram and Kadâtchapuram, to the ladies our much honoured benefactresses, who, in connexion with the Church Missionary Society, afford us the means of education.

“ The preachers of the Gospel who have been sent into the midst of us, observing the wretched and miserable way in which our fathers and mothers brought us up, and the injury we sustained thereby, frequently advised them to have us educated. They told our parents that for us to grow up in the true religion it was their duty to send us to school, that we might learn those things that pertain to the Christian faith ; but they for a long time resisted, and said, ‘ it is not good or proper for girls to learn to read.’ Thus for a long time they kept up the bad practice of thinking meanly of us, the female sex, and reared us like young wild beasts.

“ You, our benefactresses, live in a foreign land, and never saw our faces ; yet were you incited by love to God, and felt a desire that we might be instructed in the knowledge of good and evil, and know the consequences of each. You also desired we should be delivered from the power of sin, and become one

with God, and that we should clearly know the glory of Christ, who voluntarily endured inexpressible sufferings for us.

“We are poor and ignorant, but we are not only most grateful to you for these benefits, but we also praise God, through our Lord Jesus Christ, for having stirred up in your hearts the desire of doing us good, and of treating us as your own children, so that we might grow up in the true faith. We desire that the love of you, our benefactresses, may not decrease, but increase.

“We, the children that are taught, and the mistresses who teach in the above schools, and partake of your benefactions, send you this humble address,

“*Kadāṭṭṭapūram,*

“*December 14th, 1841.*”

All the mistresses of these various schools met once a month at Sātankullam, to give Mrs. Blackman an account of their scholars, to repeat the lessons they had themselves learnt during the preceding month, and to receive instruction and advice for the future.

These were hours full of interest and importance to the future welfare of many a soul, when these young mistresses and mothers, seated on the floor of the verandah, listened to their kind friend, who often would point to the infants in their arms, and press on them how much greater was their responsibility than that of their own mothers had been ; and would

set before them the important trust committed to them of bringing up immortal souls for Christ. And while the glistening eye and earnest look would tell her these affectionate appeals did not fall unheeded on the ear, her own heart often overflowed with gratitude to Him who had so blessed her labours of love.

When Mrs. Blackman left Tinnevely at the end of 1841, she broke up the school in the compound ; and some of the girls were kindly received by Mrs. Pettitt, and others by Mrs. Thomas.

The day schools she left under the care of the Rev. J. Devasagayam and his wife, who have carried them on with energy and zeal. A new one has been opened in Sâtankullam ; the monthly meetings with the mistresses, and the annual examinations of the scholars have been continued ; a Bible class of young women has been established in Kadâtchapuram, and a female adult school has also been begun there, which, when I last heard of it, was attended by seventy of the older women.

This account of the schools in the Sâtankullam district, will serve as a specimen of many others, for the missionary ladies of Palamcottah, Nalloor, Meignânapuram, Suveisashapuram, and Dohnavoor in Tinnevely, as well as those in Travancore, all have similar ones under their superintendence, which, though they may vary in some of the details, are conducted on the same general plan.

I must now come to the important question,—How are these schools supported? It is true that *three pounds* per annum, and in some places a smaller sum, will suffice for the entire support and education of a girl in one of the compound schools, and about *twelve shillings* per annum for each child, will pay all the expenses of a day school; yet it requires a large annual sum to maintain *nearly two hundred* girls on the former plan, and to provide day schools for about *six hundred* others.*

The Church Missionary Society now provides for the entire maintenance of six girls at each station; but for all beyond this, the schools are wholly dependent on the liberality of private friends. In some cases the Missionaries have been assisted by their own personal friends both in England and Germany, and not unfrequently by European gentlemen residing in the districts. The Society for Female Education in the East, has made several kind and liberal grants to this object, and a considerable portion of the required funds has arisen from sums collected by friends in England, and entrusted to Mr. Tucker, for this special purpose. Some of these have been given to the general purposes of female education, and others have been

* In Tinnevely and Travancore there are now seven hundred and sixty-five girls in the different schools connected with the Church Missionary Society.

specially appropriated to the use of one particular school or one individual child. For example ; besides the school I have told you of at Anbina gram, another clergyman has supplied means for the building of a school at Meignânapuram, and partly supports it. Friends at Hastings have contributed to Mrs. Pettitt's and Mrs. Schaffter's schools, and the teachers and children in the Hastings Sunday School support a little girl in that at Nalloor. One of Mrs. Pettitt's scholars owes her support to the younger members of a family in Kent, and another in the same school is indebted to the self-denial of a young lady, who sent her first payment with the observation, that it would only oblige her to have "one dress less in the course of the year." Three ladies at a village in Kent, maintain a child at Suveisashapuram ; and another is supported by a lady lately resident at Tunbridge Wells.

Great assistance has also been afforded by the produce of ladies' work, either sent to Madras, or disposed of among friends in England. This last mode is the best where it can be adopted ; and one Missionary basket alone in the course of the last year by this means, cast £78 into the treasury of the Lord.

You will, dear Lucy, enter into the feelings of pleasure with which these sums are distributed, and the thankfulness awakened by the receipt of such a letter as the following :—

"I have sent away all my girls but ten, and my funds were getting so very low, that I had made up my mind to give up the school altogether ; but a few friends have sent me some help, and yours coming also, I am encouraged to go on with it ; and I trust our Lord will further help, and graciously bless our weak endeavours, to the real conversion of the girls under our charge. I should be delighted if I could increase my number to what I formerly had (between thirty and forty), but I have been obliged to send away many a girl, who has come to me begging to be received."

Or, when the following reached Madras, "The state of our girls' school is getting serious, it is deeply in debt—what is to be done ? To go on is impossible.—To break it up will be doing the Mission more harm than can well be conceived"—you will judge how pleasant it must have been to be able, partly by the kindness of the Society for Female Education, and partly from other sources, to answer it by a remittance, which will for the present prevent the evil.

Do all you can, my dear friend, to excite an interest in these schools, and above all, to stir up a spirit of prayer, that while the silver and the gold may not be lacking, the Spirit of God will make the work effectual to the salvation of many souls.

We must now think of leaving Tinnevely. I could indeed have given you many more interesting

accounts of both children and adults ; but besides that want of space forbids it, I feel it is undesirable to speak much of those still alive ; and of those who are gone to their rest I know but few particulars, that have not already been published in the Church Missionary Records.

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

Note—The writer will be happy to give farther particulars of these schools to any friend who may wish for them.—Address S. T. care of Messrs. NISBET & Co., 21, Berners Street, Oxford Street.

LETTER XV.

MY DEAR LUCY,

WE have been too much engaged with the moral state of Tinnevelly, to pay much attention to its natural history, but before we quite leave the country, I must point out one or two objects of interest. The first shall be the curious nests of the "Bava," or Bottle-bird, which though not peculiar to Tinnevelly, are seen here in great numbers hanging from the branches of the cocoa nut trees; and at a distance might be mistaken for a pale brown fruit of unusual size, and strange shape.

At the proper season the little builders may be seen perched on the cocoa nut trees, and with their bills, stripping the fibres of the leaves into long threads. These they fasten to the under side of the feather-like foliage, and working downwards, are not long in preparing a habitation for their future family, and the wood-cut will give you some notion of its peculiar form. So light, and yet so strong is the texture of these neatly woven nests, that while they appear so fragile that a breath of air would scatter them in every direction, they are so firmly wrought that you may



NEST OF THE BAYA. them.

These birds have a curious custom of catching fire-flies, and fastening them to the inside of their nest with a piece of clay. The natives say it is to give the young ones light; but perhaps it may be, that as they are excluded from the sight of external objects, the parent birds take this mode of teaching them to catch their future food. The clay is to be seen in almost every nest, and now and then the fly has been found adhering to it.

I should like to shew you a "Taylor-bird" making its nest, in a very different way, and with very different materials. Choosing some tree whose leaves will be

large and strong enough for the purpose, the little workman looks out for two leaves that lie near together, and in the same direction ; and stealing a piece of cotton from some neighbouring plantation, pierces the edges of the leaves with its bill, and fastens them together by drawing the cotton through the holes. Both sides are thus sewed together about half way down ; the inside is "lined choicely" with the softest cotton, and the whole becomes a safe and unsuspected hiding-place.

The flowers too in many parts of Tinnevely are some of them very pretty ; but I will only mention a kind of grass, whose long silken plume is more beautiful than any thing of the kind I ever saw ; and a little flower, whose brilliant blue will carry your thoughts to England, and her early hedge-rows.

And now bidding farewell to Tinnevely, and all its scenes of interest and hope, we will pursue our journey to the coast of Malabar.

I can fancy, that as your eye turns to the mountain ridge that separates us from the western coast, you are longing to explore its narrow defiles and rugged passes ; to see the plantations of coffee, nutmegs, and cloves in their rich beauty on the sloping hills ; to enjoy the grandeur of the mountain scenery ; and amid these "strong foundations of the earth, whence torrents have their birth," to watch the streams now for a little space winding like a silver thread .

along a level piece of brilliant verdure, and now tumbling in wild impetuous haste from rock to rock.

But you must restrain your roving wish, for you cannot penetrate the rocky barrier : there are some mountain passes, but they are only traversed by native travellers, and by bullocks lightly laden, and would not do for *you*.

You might perhaps accomplish the pass of Arangole, near Courtallum, which was formerly the chief military road from Trichinopoly to Quilon, but this we have left behind us to the north ; the jungle, too, is unhealthy at some seasons of the year, and we shall do better to content ourselves with the less romantic, but safer, and more frequented road that passes near Cape Comorin.

Continuing our course then to the south, and skirting the southern extremity of the Ghauts, we shall soon cross the *Aranbooly lines*, the boundary between the British territory and that of the Rajah of Travancore. It once was, or was supposed to be, a formidable means of defence, but is now only a decayed wall.

We are now in Travancore, and you will be delighted with the change of scenery ; the dry sandy plains of the south-east of Tinnevely, with their unvaried forests of the stiff palmyra, are exchanged for the most beautiful variety of hill and dale, clothed with magnificent forest trees of every size, and form,

and hue, or covered with unceasing verdure. Paddy grounds, "where the rice-crops never fail," are watered by picturesque and winding rivers ; and the whole will remind you, though on a larger and bolder scale, of the finest parts of your own native land.

And now you must remember you are no longer under British jurisdiction ; the country we are in does not acknowledge our own Queen as its Sovereign Lady ; for Travancore and Cochin are governed by their own native princes, though we have a British Resident at both these courts.

Turning northward, we shall soon reach Trivandrum, the residence of the present Rajah of Travancore, and where he has established a school for native boys, in which English is taught, and the Holy Scriptures are admitted without reserve. This is the more remarkable, as though a clever and intelligent man, he is still held in bondage by the Bramins ; he has even expended large sums of money in his endeavour to become one himself, but though he has been allowed to purchase some Braminical privileges, he cannot be fully admitted to the caste, nor can he even eat with his own *Dewan*, (or Prime Minister,) who is a Bramin. His brother, the presumptive heir to the throne, called the *Elia Rajah*, is equally intelligent, and less bigotted. He is very anxious for information, fond of reading, and has gone through a course of general history, with an English gentleman

there. He has more independence of character than his brother, and must be less under the influence of caste, for on being one day reminded that he would incur pollution by something he was touching, he merely answered, "Oh, never mind, a little water will soon set that right again."

You will smile at a curious custom that is observed at the accession of a Sovereign ; the new Rajah is weighed in a balance ; gold is put into the other scale, and his weight in the precious metal is distributed as a coronation gift among the Bramins.

The succession to the "*Musnud*," or throne, both of Travancore and Cochin, passes exclusively through the female branches of the Royal family. I will not enter into the subject ; it will be enough to say, that a Rajah can, in no case, be succeeded by any of his own children. His successor must be his brother, or sister, or sister's child ; or if these should fail, some one who can through his *mother* and his *mother's mother*, &c., trace his descent from royalty.

This sad system arises from evil, and leads again to evil—it also produces a want of respect very inconsistent with our English notions, and still more so with the usual Eastern habits ; and neither the father nor the son of the reigning sovereign receives the deference we should consider due.

One day when an English gentleman high in authority in Travancore received a visit from the

Rajah of Cochin, a lady of the family passing through the outer room where a crowd of attendants were waiting to convey their master back again, observed a very nice looking old man standing without on the steps, and on inquiry was told it was the Rajah's father. Her English feelings would not let her suffer him to remain without, below even the attendants of his son ; but she found it excited great surprise when she not only invited him in, but ordered a chair to be placed for him, though, of course, only in the outer room.

The natives of rank are, generally speaking, very fond of English society, yet this has not hitherto produced any freedom of intercourse ; the same lady who showed such respect to the Rajah of Cochin's father, on being urgently invited to visit the wife of the Rajah of Travancore, was not a little surprised at the request that she would go at eight o'clock in the morning, as her Highness could not touch food till she had bathed and purified herself after the visit of an European.

This little trait will give you some idea of the bigotry and prejudice that exist among the women of the higher classes in this dark land. How one longs that some of our country-women could get access to these secluded and untaught, but often amiable beings, and lead their minds to higher and holier objects than now engage them ; and may we

not hope that by degrees some opening may be found?

The Elia Rajah of Travancore, was in the frequent habit of visiting the same gentleman to whom I have alluded, and was always much interested in the conversation and occupations of the lady of the house. One day she was employed on a piece of patchwork, with which he was greatly delighted, and the next day sent her a supply of scraps of silk from all the tailors' boxes in the palace. Another day he found her engaged in worsted work; this was still more curious to him, and he exclaimed, "I wish our ladies would learn to do something like this." She asked him how they did employ themselves, to which he answered, "In dressing, eating, and sleeping." She immediately observed, "But since your Highness seems to think this an unprofitable way of their spending their time, why should you not begin with your own household, and teach them something better?" And though the laugh of incredulity that this remark excited, and his reply that "they were too stupid to learn," did not give any immediate hope, the conversation could scarcely fail to make some impression on a mind like his.

May the rays of Divine Truth speedily penetrate the inmost recesses of these native palaces, and enlighten and cheer their inmates with heavenly light and life!

Trivandrum is an important and interesting station, and offers an excellent opening for a mission and for schools. The amount of probable good is incalculable, but the same difficulty still meets us : *There are neither funds nor labourers.*

But to resume our journey—I ought sooner to have called your attention to the change in the form of the Pagoda, for the high and heavy, yet handsome gopurms have disappeared, and their place is supplied by buildings more like the English tithe-barn of former days.

Your attention will, however, chiefly be attracted by the numerous Christian churches that meet your eye. They are built of a reddish stone, with deep sloping roofs ; they very rarely have a tower, but the chancel is higher than the body of the Church, and its roof sometimes looks like the pigeon-house towers of some of our early English Churches. The windows are narrow and round headed, and the west end is generally white-washed and adorned with crosses.

The population is greatly mixed both in Travancore and Cochin. The bulk of the people are Heathen ; but there are many Mohammedans among them, and a large proportion of Christians.* A few of these are *Protestants*—the descendants of the Dutch, who had

* Nearly one-seventh are Christian. According to the Government Census in 1836, the total number of inhabitants in these two states is 1,568,844, of whom 33,700 are Roman Catholics, 85,128 Syro-Romans, and 125,356 Syrians.

possession of Cochin, &c. for 150 years, from 1663,—the rest are either *Roman Catholics*, *Syro-Romans*, or *Syrians*.

The *Roman Catholics* are chiefly to be met with near the coast ; they consist partly of the descendants of the Portuguese, who were the first European settlers in this part of the country, (about 1520,) and partly of native converts from among the low castes, particularly the fishermen. They are divided into two parties ; the one under the original Portuguese Archbishoprics of Goa and Cranganore ; the other under Vicars Apostolic, who come *direct* from Rome :—Italians, French, and Irish. The Pope upholds the latter ; and those who adhere to the old establishment of Goa and its dependencies are declared to be schismatics. These two parties are always quarrelling, sometimes fighting, and blood has been shed in their struggles.*

Alas ! like their brethren in Tinnevelly, they have little of Christianity but the name ; and agree too well with the character given by the Abbé Dubois, of the general state of the members of his Church in India. To use his own words, “by far the greater number exhibit nothing but a vain phantom, an empty shade of Christianity ;” nor need we wonder at it, for it was little more than “an empty shade of

* The same division exists (though not with bloodshed) in Madras.

Christianity," that had been presented to them, and how then could substantial fruit be expected ?

The first European Missionary in the south of India was Francis Xavier. A Spaniard of noble birth, sincere, ardent, and devoted, but strongly attached to Ignatius Loyola, and with his mind warped by the false principles of his Order*—he was selected by the Pope and the King of Portugal, as the fittest person to be entrusted with the establishment of the Church of Rome in India. But though he won the hearts of the people by his affectionate and gentle manner, his patience under want and suffering, and the earnestness of his deportment ; and though the number of heathens said to have been baptized by his own hands is almost incredible,† it is sad to read how little his teaching agreed with that of our Lord and his apostles. We can trace in it no preaching of "the law, as a school-master to bring" his hearers "to Christ ;" no attempt to convince them of sin and guilt, or to lead the sinner to a crucified Saviour for pardon, and to the Holy Spirit for a renewed heart. Ignorant of the languages, and finding no efficient interpreters, he procured a translation of the Lord's Prayer, Ten Commandments, and Creed, together with some addresses to the Virgin and other

* He was one of the earliest Jesuits.

† The Roman Catholics in Tinnevely are the descendants of his converts.

saints ; and assembling the people, would make them repeat after him this mixture of truth and error over and over again, till they had learnt it by rote, when he considered them fit for baptism, on their promising to renounce their idols. But his own upright mind was little satisfied with the spiritual state of his converts ; and though there is good hope that a few among them were truly converted to God, yet he himself wrote of his disappointment, at discovering "in the manners and prejudices of the natives, an insurmountable bar to the progress of Christianity among them,"—and of his "being entirely disheartened by the apparent impossibility of making real converts." How strange it is that it never seems to have occurred to him that it was more probable the fault should lie in his own unscriptural mode of teaching,* than in any peculiar unfitness in the native

* The means adopted by later Missionaries on the eastern side of the Peninsula were far more unscriptural. It is recorded of Robert de Nobili, the founder of the Roman Catholic Mission at Madura, and of other Jesuits who accompanied him, that in order to obtain a favourable reception from the Bramins, they pretended to be themselves descended from Brahmâ, and to be "the Bramins of the West." They declared that Brahmâ had sent them to instruct their Indian brethren on some points with which they were unacquainted ; and in order more effectually to ingratiate themselves with them, and to carry on the deception, they adopted their dress and customs. They even assumed the "Câvi" or yellow dress of the

mind to receive the Word of Life.—“Go ye into *all* nations, and preach the Gospel to *every creature*.”

The privilege of declaring the truth as it is in Jesus has been reserved for our own country and our own age. Some sheep have been already gathered into the Saviour's fold, and would we but arise and answer the present call from all parts of India, surely we might humbly hope they would be increased a thousand fold. But now adieu for the present. In my next I will tell you more of the Syrians and Syro-Romans.

Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

Hindoo devotees, and wore upon their forehead the wafer spot of Siva ; while, instead of giving them the Bible, and preaching Christ without reserve, they composed and circulated works in which some parts of our Lord's history were mixed up with Hindoo legends ! We need not then be surprised either at the number of their nominal converts, nor at the want of real Christianity among them.

LETTER XVI.

MY DEAR LUCY,

WHEN Vasco di Gama and his companions first arrived on the shores of Malabar, in 1498, we can readily picture to ourselves their feelings of wonder and curiosity, at the strange and unknown objects that presented themselves. But with what surprise must they have observed a number of Christian Churches, and found that many of these strangers, so entirely unlike themselves in colour, dress, language, and habits, were yet united to them by the bond of a common faith, and that a considerable and influential body of Christians existed among the heathen inhabitants of the western coast of India.

These were the *Syrian Christians of Malabar*: the origin of their Church is veiled in obscurity,* but in an original MS. still to be found among them, it is related that the Apostle Thomas brought the Gospel to them, A.D. 52, that he made many converts, and, after residing there for some years, crossed to "Meliapore," (St. Thomé, near Madras) and was, as I have before mentioned, put to death on the mount that still bears his name.

* See La Croze's *Histoire du Christianisme*, &c. ; and Rev. J. Hough's work on the same subject.

Many writers doubt the correctness of this statement, and attribute their conversion to Missionaries sent from Alexandria, by St. Mark, but I do not myself see why St. Thomas, to whom it appears was assigned the countries of Parthia and Bactria, might not have crossed the "Stony Girdle," that forms the northern boundary of Hindostan, and visited the shores of the Peninsula.

But through whatever channel God was pleased to send to these distant people the message of His love, there seems reason to suppose they received the Gospel in the first, or early in the second century of our era; and as one of the prelates who attended the Council of Nice, A.D. 325, is mentioned as the metropolitan of *Persia and Great India*, the Christians of Malabar must have then been in connexion with that Patriarchate.

I do not think that much was known of them from this time, except that a merchant of Alexandria, writing about the year 547, of a visit he had made to these countries, after speaking of the Christians he had met with in the island of "Taprobane," (Ceylon) goes on to say that he had also seen those "in Malè where pepper grows," who had "their own priests and a bishop from Persia."

In the following century, the rise and spread of the Mohammedan power prevented any intercourse between the western churches and these distant brethren; and for many ages their very existence

seems to have been forgotten by Europeans. We know little of their internal history during this long period ; we can only hope, and confidently believe that amidst all the errors and corruptions which in common with the other eastern Churches, crept in among them, God did not leave Himself without witnesses ; and that many a heart received the grace of God to its eternal salvation.

When the Portuguese arrived in Malabar, they found a regularly constituted Church in externals, with Deacons, *Catandrs*, (or Priests) and a *Metran*, (or Bishop) whom they received from Mosûl, at that time the seat of the ancient Patriarchate of Persia. They were in possession of extraordinary privileges, which had been conferred on them by Ceram Peroumal, the heathen Emperor of Malabar, in the ninth century, and which had been continued to them by the Princes, among whom his territory was afterwards divided. Their rank was fixed next to the Bramins, above even the *Nairs*, or military chiefs ; and they were allowed in civil and ecclesiastical matters, (though not in criminal cases) to be governed by their own *Metran*. They were permitted to have *enclosed porches* to their houses, a privilege enjoyed only by the Bramins, and even to ride on *an elephant*, an honour peculiar to the Royal family.*

* At one time they were sufficiently powerful to assert their entire independence—they threw off the heathen

The Portuguese writers speak of them as being superior in their appearance and deportment, to the heathen among whom they dwelt ; their general character was temperate, industrious, upright, and courteous ; and the fifth commandment was especially honoured by them. They would never sit in the presence of their parents, elders, or superiors, unless desired to do so, and when spoken to, would put their left hand upon their mouth* to denote attention. The women are described as modest and retiring, and the men as expert hunters and excellent soldiers. Their disposition is said to have been peaceable, though they seldom appeared abroad unarmed, generally carrying a naked sword in one hand, and a buckler in the other. They were in good circumstances, and carried on a profitable trade in pepper, and in the produce of the palmyra.

Fair as this picture at first sight appears, it will not bear to be looked into too closely. With so many outward good qualities, they exhibited a sad want of Christian graces ; they had indeed kept themselves from the heathenism with which they were surrounded ; but they had not escaped the contagion of pride, worldliness, and the love of power. We are told that they carefully avoided yoke, and for a while were governed by their own kings, though afterwards they again became subject to the petty Rajahs of the country.

* Job xxix. 9.

touching any person of inferior caste, even a Nair ; that in the roads and streets they would cry out from a distance, that the passers by might be prepared to show them honour, and that if any refused they were at liberty to punish him on the spot. They had even accepted the permission of putting to death any heathen who should strike a Christian ; and though this was not always put into execution, the offender was only pardoned on condition of his presenting a gold or silver hand to the church of the injured person.

But you will the less wonder at so universal a want of humility and love among the Christians of Malabar, when I tell you that they had the Scriptures only in an unknown tongue ; for while the language of the people was *Malay-alim*, the Bible and Liturgy were in the *ancient Syriac*, and not understood except by the Catanârs, and by very few even of them. Errors in doctrine, and superstitions in practice, had been also introduced, and there is too much cause to fear that they had little more than “ a name to live.”

Whether they were restless under the mild government of their heathen princes, or whether it seemed to them more fitting that Christian subjects should be governed by a Christian king, I cannot tell ; but when Vasco di Gama made his second voyage in 1502, they sent him a deputation, begging him to take them under his protection. The deputation brought with them a staff of vermillion wood, mounted at

each end with silver, and ornamented with three silver bells. This they said was the sceptre of their own former kings, and they begged him to present it to the king of Portugal. They were received with much kindness, and many fair promises ; and little could these poor people then suppose, that before many years had elapsed they would have cause so bitterly to regret this confidence in their new acquaintances, or that Christians would treat them with far greater cruelty than Pagans or Mohammedans.

For forty years, however, no notice seems to have been taken of this message, and the Syrians continued without molestation to receive their Bishops from Mosûl, and to conduct their ecclesiastical affairs as before.

In the meantime, the power of the Portuguese gradually increased in India. In the course of a few years they had obtained settlements along the whole western coast ; they had sent a bishop and priests, and had established Goa as their chief ecclesiastical station ; where they afterwards introduced the inquisition. Fearful indeed is the description given of this unjust tribunal,—the dark dungeons, the intolerable tortures inflicted on those who were only *accused* of what they called heresy, and the flames that awaited those who were convicted of it, are too dreadful to dwell upon. For more than 250 years did the inquisition at Goa exercise its hateful power ; but in 1816 it was suppressed, I trust for ever, by the Prince-

Regent of Portugal. It contained 200 cells for prisoners, one-half of which were lighted by an iron grating, the other half were totally dark.*

But Rome could not long permit the Syrian Churches to remain undisturbed ; and under the pretence of rooting out their errors in doctrine, she began her attempts to bring them into subjection to herself. In 1545, she sent out Father Vincent, a Franciscan friar, who was at first received as a Christian brother, till the Syrians, discovering his real designs, set themselves strenuously to oppose him. The Jesuits observing the failure of Father Vincent's plans, took the matter into their own hands, but at first with no better success. In vain did they build a college for the education of the Syrian youths, and persuade many to put themselves under their instruction ;—the young men, when ordained, refused to preach against their own prelates, and those among them who were suspected of having imbibed the opinions of Rome, were excluded from the Churches. In vain too did the Roman Catholics attempt to draw aside the multitude by processions and pageants in honour of the Virgin Mary—the churches were closed against them, and the people, shutting their eyes, and turning away their heads, cried out, “We are Christians, we do not worship idols.” But popery is of too determined a character to be so easily re-

* It is now falling to decay.

pulsed ; the Jesuits persevered in their attempts, and, in 1595, they were supplied with a fitting and successful agent in F. Alexio Menezes, who was made Archbishop of Goa.

I shall not enter into any lengthened history of the unholy means made use of by Menezes and his predecessors to attain their object, but only mention very briefly some of the leading facts in this painful history.

In answer to the arrogant claim of Rome to the right of universal dominion, the Syrians represented their own unbroken descent from the eastern churches—this was met by the most unblushing falsehoods ; and their appeal to the records of their churches, in proof of their assertion, was settled by the Jesuits seizing and burning all their ecclesiastical documents they could lay their hands upon. The Metrans were one after another seized ; one was murdered by the Inquisition at Goa ; another was sent to Portugal, and disappeared in some mysterious way ; and the ports were closed against any who might be sent from Mosûl to supply their place.

Menezes, however, notwithstanding all his consummate art, his flexibility of principle, and fixedness of purpose, found he had undertaken no easy task. In a visitation he made throughout the churches, he often found himself received with coldness, or with indignation. At one place the church was filled with armed men, ready to oppose him ; at another,

the inhabitants left the place on his approach ; neither man, woman, nor child was to be seen in the streets, and his own followers were the only listeners to his exhortations. But, undismayed, by all this opposition, he steadily pursued his course. Treaties were made and broken as suited his present purpose ; the aid of heathen princes was called in ; and stratagems and force were alternately employed to reduce the Syrians to obedience.

For more than fifty years was this struggle carried on ; and alas ! what a melancholy spectacle was presented to the heathens around ! Christians contending against each other in an ungodly warfare, and with carnal weapons ; for though the Syrians, it is true, had justice on their side, and did not equal the Roman Catholics in violence and cruelty ; they fell but little short of them in falsehood and deceit.

Heavenly armour alone could have protected them from an enemy like Menezes ; and this unhappily they had never sought for ; so that at last, worn out and dispirited, they gave up the contest, and consented to abide by the decision of a Synod proposed by their artful foe.

This assembly was held at Diamper, in 1599 ; and it must have brought their present degradation more strongly to the minds of these poor people when they remembered that the spot on which, they now met to sign away their liberties had

once been the residence of their own independent sovereigns.

Menezes had taken care that any Catanâr likely to thwart his views should be excluded from this Synod ; all present were persuaded or compelled to sign the articles he had previously prepared ; and the constitution of their church was, by the decrees of this Synod, materially altered. They were required to acknowledge the supremacy of the Pope—transubstantiation and purgatory—to adopt the use of images, the adoration of saints, and masses and prayers for the dead, and to enforce the celibacy of the clergy. The married Catanârs were excommunicated, unless they put away their wives ; and one poor man, who dreaded the one, and could not resolve upon the other, died in a few days of a broken heart.

Outward unity was now established among the Christian Churches on the coast of Malabar, but the Syrians groaned in secret under the Jesuits' heavy yoke. The bondage became more and more intolerable, and in 1656, symptoms of dissatisfaction began openly to appear. Some of the churches on the coast, uniting with a few in the interior, who had continued to maintain their independence, attempted to emancipate themselves, but their Portuguese and Romish masters were as yet too strong for them, and nothing effectual was accomplished till the Dutch took possession of Cochin in 1663.

This event enabled those Churches who had not quite sunk into Popish superstition to free themselves from their foreign tyrants and to re-establish their former constitution. They sent again for a bishop from Mosûl, but there was none among them to awaken a spirit of scriptural reformation, and their former errors and superstitions were still increased by the addition of others they had learnt from Rome. These are still called *Syrians*.

A great number had however sunk too low to care for even this partial deliverance; they have willingly continued under the dominion of the Pope, and are distinguished by the name of *Syro-Romans*. Their public worship differs from the Roman Catholic only in the use of Syriac instead of Latin; and they are in a melancholy state of corruption, both in doctrine and practice.

Strange as it may seem, the Protestant Churches of Europe remained all this time ignorant or unmindful, not only of the struggles and sufferings of the Syrian Church in Malabar, but of its very existence; and the publication of the work of La Croze, in 1724, seems to have been the first time that any attention was excited for this ancient church so peculiarly situated in the midst of heathens.

In 1725, the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge made an attempt, through their Missionaries at Tranquebar, to become better acquainted

with their actual circumstances, and to ascertain the practicability of their union with some Protestant Church ; but the attempt was unsuccessful, and the Syrians were again forgotten till Dr. Buchanan's visit to them in 1806.

His account awakened a more general interest for them ; Colonel Macaulay, the English resident in Travancore, adopted measures for their benefit, and his successor, Colonel Munro, exerted himself still more actively on their behalf.

At this time they were in a deplorable situation ; the Roman Catholics had continued to persecute them with unrelenting animosity ; the princes of the country took advantage of their defenceless state to plunder and insult them ; and the Dutch, from political motives, abandoned them to their fate. The few copies of the Holy Scriptures they had among them were in the ancient Syriac ; their liturgy, also in the same unknown tongue, was full of error and superstition, and their clergy were, generally speaking, ignorant and immoral.

Colonel Munro began by obtaining from the Rannee (or Queen) of Travancore, relief from many of the unjust and oppressive burdens that had been imposed upon them ; and anxious likewise for their mental and spiritual improvement, entered into communication with the Rev. Marmaduke Thompson, then one of the Honourable East India Company's

Chaplains at Madras, whose name is so well known to all who have inquired into the history of missions in Southern India.

In consequence of Mr. Thompson's representations to the Church Missionary Society, they resolved to establish a Mission on this coast, and fixed on Alleppie, Cottayam, and Cochin, as the three stations to be occupied ; but I must reserve any account of these for a future letter.

Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

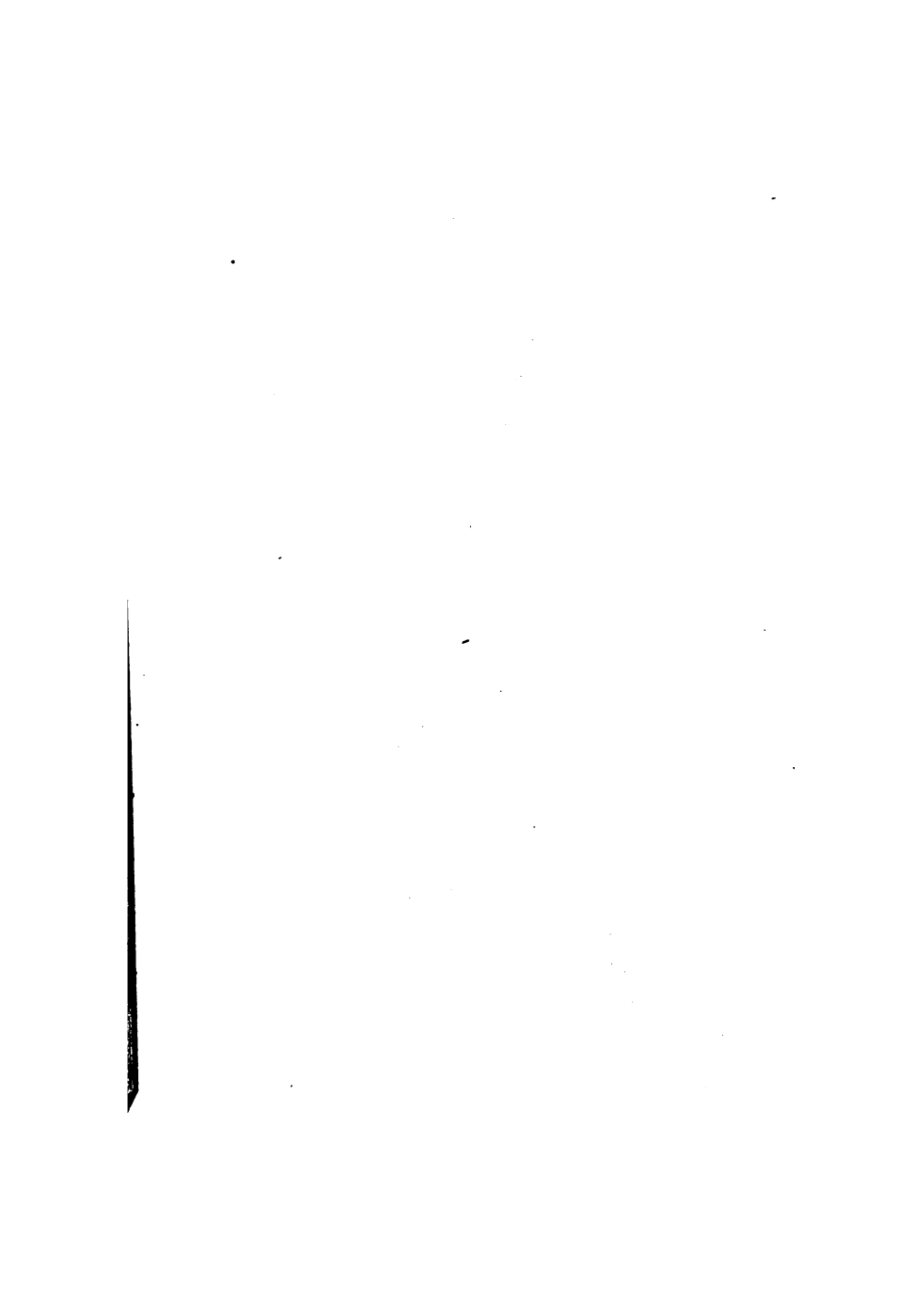
LETTER XVII.

MY DEAR LUCY,

THE last place we stopped at was Trivandrum, and soon after leaving it, we shall find we must quit our palanquins, and getting into a covered boat with twelve or fourteen rowers, pursue our course along the *Backwater*. If you look at the little map that accompanies this letter, you will see that besides the rivers that intersect this part of the country in all directions, there is a long sheet of water running parallel to the sea, and extending from Quilon in the south, to Chowgaut and Trichoor in the north. This is the *Backwater* ; it is in some places narrow, but in others, seven or eight miles in breadth, and being navigable throughout, affords a safe and easy mode of inland communication.

As we glide swiftly and pleasantly along, you will be delighted with the ever varying scene. The still and glittering surface of the water is ruffled only by the boats of fishermen plying their busy task, or by the slighter motion of those that are lying sheltered and at rest beneath the plumes of cocoa-nut trees that gracefully bend over them. Here, we shall pass





some picturesque and wooded island—there, a neat and pretty cottage will present itself—while now and then, the white-washed western end of some Syrian or Syro-Roman Church peeps out from among the trees, and awakens a prayerful wish, that the time may come when the cross that ornaments it shall no longer be an empty symbol, but a faithful witness that “Christ crucified” is preached within its walls.

After rowing several miles, a canal opening to the sea will carry us to Alleppie. This is a large town, and the chief port on this coast for the export of pepper and other spices. The houses, thickly set among cocoa-nut trees, extend three miles along the water, and contain a mixed population of about 44,000.* Heathens, Mohammedans, Roman Catholics, and Syro-Romans, a few Parsees and Arabs from the Persian Gulf, may all be met with here, besides strangers from all parts of the world who visit it for purposes of trade. The Mission compound is in the very heart of the town; and the canal which passes the gate, affords a constant and ready access to the numerous villages that lie around.

The first Missionary stationed here, was the Rev. T. Norton, in 1816; and I should like to give you many particulars of his quiet useful course, of his joy as one heathen after another renounced idolatry, and

* The population of the whole district is calculated at 250,000.

a few Roman Catholics joined our church, till in 1839 he numbered 560 baptized persons in his congregation. I might tell you also of his many discouragements,* and of the opposition he met with, especially from the Roman Catholics, but my space is too limited, and I must only tell you, that after twenty-four years of patient persevering labours, he was, in 1840, called to another world, by the Master he had so long loved and served on earth.

Besides building a church, Mr. Norton established several schools, and a boys' seminary in the Mission compound ; and in 1818, Mrs. Norton began a girls' school.

Speaking of these in 1835, when he paid a visit to Alleppie, the Rev. J. Tucker mentioned that "the character of the whole establishment was that of cheerfulness, good order, and proper discipline." I know that the girls' school in particular stood high in the opinion of those who were acquainted with it, and though I can give you none of its interior details, I remember hearing how much the late Mrs. Norton

* Writing home on this subject, he adds, "Yet balancing the value of one single soul with millions of irrational worlds, and finding it outweigh them all, I cannot but be grateful for the little, little as it is, that has been accomplished. It is more than all the angels with the Church in heaven, and all the men on earth, could of themselves have effected. A soul born again is a new creation, the work of Almighty Power."

was cheered and gratified, at being welcomed home after an absence on account of illness, by a hymn of praise, which, unknown to any one, her scholars had learnt for the occasion. I could show you too a specimen of their patchwork, which in accuracy of arrangement, and neatness of execution, is superior to any I have seen from schools in England.

The Rev. J. Hawkesworth has succeeded Mr. Norton, and is now labouring at Alleppee with diligence and zeal ; he is assisted by Mr. Ross, an European Catechist. There are 267 children in the various schools, of whom thirty are girls under Mrs. Hawkesworth's immediate eye, and if the dews of heaven continue to descend, many a plant of grace shall spring up to their own comfort, and the glory of their Lord.*

Till lately the girls' school was entirely maintained by private contributions ; chiefly from friends at Clifton ; and though at present six scholars are provided for by the Church Missionary Society, the rest

* Accounts received since the above was written, give very encouraging details of some visits Mr. Hawkesworth has made to distant villages, and of the willingness, or rather anxiety of many Bramins, and other high caste people, to receive portions of the Scriptures. He had just baptized a high caste man, who, though he lived eighty miles from Alleppee, had several times visited both Mr. Norton and himself, to obtain books and Christian instruction.

continue wholly dependent on individual support. Some kind friends at Hastings have undertaken the maintenance of three children, and it is earnestly hoped that the death of Mr. Norton will not have checked that liberality of former friends, which has been so great a blessing to this station.

Upon leaving Alleppie, the same canal will take us again into the Backwater ; and as we proceed towards Cottayam, I cannot resist taking you a few miles up one of the numerous rivers that empty themselves into it. As the boat slowly makes its way against the stream, you will enjoy the wild and beautiful scenery on every side ; sometimes the river is so shut in by forests, that it looks like a narrow lake, and your eye will seek in vain where your boat can find a passage ; sometimes the woods recede, giving a view of rising grounds, adorned with the finest trees, and behind them the wild and picturesque heights of the Ghauts, clothed with wood to their topmost summit. You will admire the black and golden plumage of the mango bird, and the dazzling purplish blue of another, whose name I do not know ; and you will fancy that the stately tread of the peacock is still more stately in his own "sunny land," than when an exile in our northern clime. In the evening, we shall perhaps catch sight of a herd of elephants coming to the river side to quench their thirst, or we may be amused by a family of monkeys, old and

young, sitting on a tree, enjoying the freedom of their native woods, and chattering at us as we pass beneath. Perhaps too the sound of the evening bell of some venerable looking Syrian Church, standing on a wooded eminence, may be wafted to us across the valley, and awaken a long train of saddening thoughts and cheering hopes of past and future days.

These churches are, however, generally built by the side of the rivers, and the rudely carved flights of steps that lead up the steep banks tell you that the access to them must often be by water.

There are many miserable looking huts, standing singly by the rivers, or buried deep in the surrounding jungle, belonging to the "*Churmurs*," or slaves of the soil, of whom it is said there are not less than 100,000 in Travancore and Cochin. But there is among these woods, a race still below the slaves, called by the English "jungle people," by the natives, "*Kurdakur*." These wretched beings are literally outcasts; they must not come within a considerable distance of any other person,* and if as they pass along the public road, they see any one approaching, they cry aloud to warn him to stop till they have hid themselves in the jungle, where they

* It is in some measure the same with all the low caste (or rather *no caste*) people on this coast; they must retreat to a certain distance, or else they get cruelly beaten.

howl to him for relief. They live on wild roots and berries, or if a passing traveller should throw them some small piece of money, they go to within ninety-six paces of a village, (for they dare not enter one,) and calling aloud to the bazaar man to tell him what they want, they place the money on a stone, and retreating to a distance, leave it to his honesty what quantity of food they shall receive in return. These people are very black, the women have scarcely more clothing than the men, and they have altogether a more degraded appearance than you can well conceive those who were once made in the image of God could ever have sunk into. It is a comfort to know that even these poor creatures have not been overlooked by our Missionaries; and whenever the late Rev. S. Ridsdale, of Cochin, heard any of them shouting to him from the jungle, he would take them to his house, give them food and clothing, and declare to them the way of salvation.

Cottayam lies at some distance to the north of Alleppie and entering the Cottayam River, we shall soon see the pretty Syrian Church standing on a steep bank of laterite that rises from it.

The village itself is scattered over uneven ground; and the Missionaries houses are on a hill commanding beautiful views of the surrounding country.

The first Missionaries appointed to this station, were the Rev. B. Bailey, who arrived in 1817, and



SYRIAN CHURCH OF COTTAYAM.

the Rev. Joseph Fenn, in 1818 ; and in 1819, these were joined by the Rev. H. Baker. Mr. Bailey's work was chiefly to carry on translations, and to take charge of the little congregation in the place—Mr. Baker's to visit the neighbouring villages, and Mr. Fenn was appointed to superintend a College for the education of the Syrian youth, which, at the suggestion of Colonel Munro the Rannee of Travancore* had, built and gradually endowed,—where he was soon after joined by the Rev. Dr. Doran. The Missionaries had the cordial support of the Metran, who then presided

* Notwithstanding all her intercourse with Europeans her kindness to her Christian subjects, and the opportunities she had of becoming acquainted with Christianity, this amiable and enlightened Princess lived and died a heathen.

over the Churches, and who was a comparatively enlightened man, very anxious for the improvement of his people and for the circulation of the Scriptures.

Placed, as the Missionaries at Cottayam are, among nominal Christians, their situation greatly differs from that of their brethren in Tinnevely, or even in the other stations in Travancore ; they have little intercourse with the heathens, and their office is not so much to attack the strongholds of Paganism, as to hold up a burning and shining light, by which the darkened Syrian Churches, may rekindle their own expiring lamps. A more silent, but not less important work, for were these once enlightened with the pure light of life, how would their brightness shine throughout Southern India to the praise and glory of God. But you will see that a work of this kind is likely to afford less *incident* than missions more directly to the heathen, and I shall pass on to the present time, only first giving you an account of the Cottayam Printing Press.

This Printing Press had been anxiously expected, and its arrival was not only an unspeakable joy to the Missionaries, but a subject of great delight to the Metran ; it was a thing, he said, "that had often been heard of in that country, but had never been seen." But to Mr. Bailey's disappointment he found the types were only English ones ; and though these would be very useful in providing English books for the students

in the College, they were of no use at all in printing the Scriptures which he had, by this time, translated into Malay-alim. The Corresponding Committee undertook to have a fount of Malay-alim types cast at Madras ; a year elapsed before they arrived ; and the eagerness with which Mr. Bailey had looked forward to their arrival, was only equalled by his mortification at finding them so defective and incorrect as to be nearly useless. Most persons, I think, would have been tempted to give up the attempt of printing in Malay-alim as hopeless, and have contented themselves with getting as many MS. copies made as possible. But Mr. Bailey was not discouraged, he knew how great an instrument for good the free circulation of the word of God must ever prove, and he knew how few copies comparatively could be obtained by mere transcribing. Accordingly without having ever seen a type foundry or any part of one, he set himself to form his own types with only such aid as he could obtain from books and the common native workmen. By their help he succeeded in producing a set of types of which Colonel M'Douall (then the Resident) speaks as extremely beautiful and correct. Still there was no printer ; but not disheartened, Mr. Bailey so efficiently instructed an orphan boy whom he had benevolently brought up, that this want was soon supplied.

How pleasant it is to see a mind thus overcoming

difficulties which appeared almost insurmountable, and this not so much by any sudden exertion, or feeling of enthusiasm, but by steady, well-directed persevering effort.

The printed Malay-alim Scriptures were indeed Mr. Bailey's own. The translation was his, the types were formed by himself, and the printing was executed by one whom his own kindness had brought up ; and who shall say how many hearts have had reason to bless God that He did not permit his servant to give up the work in despair ?*

Since that time Mr. Bailey has translated the whole of our common Prayer Book into Malay-alim, revised a second edition, and has now completed a Malay-alim and English dictionary, of which the Rajah undertakes to pay the whole cost.

Mr. Bailey and Mr. Baker still remain at Cottayam, Mr. Fenn and Dr. Doran have returned to England, and a new college has been built, of which the Rev. John Chapman and the Rev. J. Johnson have the charge, and while labouring to instruct the pupils in the various branches of human learning, are earnestly endeavouring to instil into their minds the principles of pure and vital godliness. There are

* Besides the distribution of the Scriptures among the Syrians, many instances have occurred of Syro-Roman and Roman Catholic Priests applying both for Syriac and Malay-alim Bibles, and also for tracts which Mr. Bailey is printing for the Malay-alim Church of England Tract and Book Society.

seventy Syrian youths as boarders, besides a few day scholars, (eighteen of whom are Heathens, and three Bramins,) and their teachers speak of them with satisfaction and hope. There is a neat Chapel attached to the college, in which our Church service is daily performed, in the morning in Malay-alim, and in the evening in English. Neat and substantial churches have, by the exertions of Mr. Bailey and Mr. Baker been built at Cottayam* and Collatta, and another has been begun at Pallam, for which, as well as for the completion of the church at Cottayam, funds are still wanted.

Much has been done, and much we believe and hope is still doing among the Syrian Christians, and many of the laity have become awakened to the errors in which they had been instructed; but as a body, the Syrian Church in Malabar is in a sadly fallen state. Superstition and errors abound; the present Metran differs in every respect both in principle and practice from his predecessor; and

* In a letter lately received from the Bishop of Calcutta, after his metropolitan visitation of Travancore, he says:—"The Syrian Missions are prospering. I have been preaching in Mr. Bailey's fine noble church, the glory of Travancore—the whole area covered with devout hearers from Cottayam and the neighbourhood. Hallelujah! What would Claudius Buchanan have said in 1806, if he could have seen that in thirty-seven years, five English churches—for such is the fact—with thousands of attentive hearers, would be raised!"

excommunicates any of the Catanârs who *preach* to their people ; and very few have either the light or the courage to brave his censure. Boys of nine or ten years of age, and sometimes much younger, are ordained Deacons for the sake of the fees.*

The dress of the Syrian Catanârs and Deacons is a loose garment of white cotton, reaching from the throat to below the knees, with loose sleeves to the wrist, and not confined round the waist. On the head they frequently wear a small tight black scull cap, and their feet are protected by neither shoes nor sandals, but by a wooden sole, with two blocks beneath to raise it from the ground, very like our bath-clogs, only without any strap or means of keeping it on the foot, except a wooden peg which passes between the great toe and its adjoining neighbour. It must, I am sure, require all the elasticity of muscle for which the natives of India are remarkable, to enable them to walk at all in this clumsy contrivance.

The generality of the women, both Christian and heathen, on this coast, are not ashamed to wear no clothing above the waist ; but the dress of the more respectable among them differs but little from those on the other coast, except in an ornament (if I may call it so) for the ear. It is a piece of wood, or buffalo s horn, the shape of a large cork, an inch and

* Accounts have been received of a new Metran being on his way from Mosûl.

a-half, or two inches in diameter, put through a slit in the lower part of the ear, which has gradually been made large enough to receive it, by having larger and larger rolls of palmyra leaf worn in it, till the ear itself is made to reach half way to the shoulder.

Both Mrs. Bailey and Mrs. Baker have very nice girls' schools in their compounds. The instruction in Mrs. Baker's school is exclusively in Malay-alim, in Mrs. Bailey's they are also taught English ; and some of them are sufficiently advanced to read the English bible fluently. At both schools the elder girls read the Malay-alim scriptures, and commit portions of them to memory, learn the collects, prayers, and hymns ; and the younger ones are taught Dr. Watts' little catechisms, and shorter hymns and prayers. They are instructed in plain needle-work, knitting, and spinning, and you have seen the pretty samplers that have been sent home as specimens of their marking. These girls were as much surprised and delighted at a doll dressed like an English cottage girl, as those at Madras were with the housemaid I told you of before ; and the shoes and stockings were special objects of wonder. In return they dressed one like themselves, a pretty looking little figure, with her cloth neatly arranged, a muslin scarf over her head and modestly drawn round the face, and an olei school-book in her hand. Most of these children afford encouragement and hope to their kind teachers ; they

are generally docile, cheerful, and affectionate, manifest a desire for improvement, and make as much progress as can be expected. Mrs. Bailey has now the children of some of her earliest scholars, and there is a marked difference between them and the children of other parents.

The lady who has the charge of one of these schools wrote me a very pleasing account of her two oldest scholars, of their affectionate attachment to each other, and their readiness to attend to and instruct the younger ones ; and, speaking of their conduct to herself during a severe illness, says, "it has far more than repaid me for the time I have spent in teaching them. They have not only been kind and attentive nurses, but have greatly contributed to my comfort by reading to me, and indeed doing anything they could to serve me." She adds, "They all need your prayers that God may lead them to a knowledge of Christ, and make them useful to others."

The girls at the other school gave a short time ago an encouraging proof that the pains bestowed upon them had not been thrown away ; for previous to the confirmation held at Cottayam by the Bishop of Madras, in December, 1840,* finding that some of the married women who were candidates, were prevented by the care of their families from attending the

* There were on this occasion nearly 200 confirmed in the Cottayam district.

lectures in the church, they used to go and read to them at their own houses, and were thus the means of imparting to them more instruction than could have been expected.

Till lately Mrs. Baker's school has been supported by the Church Missionary Society, and Mrs. Bailey's exclusively by private contributions ; but in future six girls at each school will be provided for by the Society, and any addition to that number must depend on the kindness of friends. At present, one child in Mrs. Bailey's school is maintained by a gentleman and lady in Kent ; another, by the ladies at the head of a young ladies' establishment near London ; a third, by their pupils, and a fourth by a clergyman in the North of England. Others are supported by unappropriated sums placed at the disposal of Mr. Tucker, and by a very kind annual contribution from the same friends in Nottinghamshire, who assist the " Retford school " in Tinnevelly.

The same kind friends at Hastings, whom I mentioned just now, have promised to provide for three of Mrs. Baker's scholars ; and Mrs. Johnson also receives assistance from England for two or three girls.

Each child costs about as much for its maintenance as in Tinnevelly,* and the amount required for twenty five or thirty girls in each school, is such as to cause the ladies who manage them many an anxious thought.

* Letter 14.

One of them, in returning her acknowledgments to the Society for Female Education in the East, for a present she had received from them, says, " Their kind donation was more than usually opportune; many of my friends in England, who had often assisted me, having been removed by death, whilst others are from a reverse of fortune, unable to give me aid. Hitherto the Lord has not suffered me to want funds to support those He has brought under our roof, I trust for good, though I frequently have not known from what quarter the expenses of the following month would come."

This is a long letter, my dear Lucy, but I could more easily lengthen than abridge it.

Believe me,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER XVIII.

MY DEAR LUCY,

I MENTIONED *Cochin* as one of the earliest places occupied by the Church Missionary Society in Travancore ; but, before I take you there, we will visit the more recent station at *Mavelicarè*. Again taking possession of our covered boat, we must retrace our progress down the Cottayam river and along the Backwater, till we come to the broad stream of the Panda, and ascending this beautiful river, and passing the villages of Changanore and Puttencave, with their venerable looking churches, we shall soon reach the smaller river that leads to Mavelicarè.

Though we are approaching the Ghauts, the country has become low and flat, the soil is chiefly sand, there are no sea breezes to assuage the excessive heat of the dry season of the year, and in the monsoon, the rising of the rivers and the heavy rains make it damp and sultry. It is indeed neither so pleasant nor so healthy a place as many others, but it is of immense importance as a Missionary Station.

It is situated in the very heart of a dense heath and Syrian population ; the district contains no

270,000 inhabitants, the pagodas are numerous, and twenty-one Syrian churches lie within a few miles of the town. It is very much shut out from intercourse with Europeans ; and when the Rev. Joseph Peet took up his abode there he was looked at with wonder by hundreds who had never before seen a white man. But Mrs. Peet excited much more astonishment ; soon after their arrival, she went one day into the town to visit a sick person, and many were the speculations of who or what she could be. "Is that a woman?" "Oh no, it is no woman, for she has a Catanâr's gown on, and has nothing in her ears," were among the expressions of wonder her appearance drew forth.

Mavelicarè was the capital of one of the little principalities into which Travancore was formerly divided ; and there is much in the size of the buildings, the number of the tanks, and its general appearance, to tell you of its former greatness. A very extensive fort, now in decay, marks the place that was once the palace of the Rajah ; and the remains of broad and well constructed roads, planted on each side with trees, show an unusual degree of improvement. It is called by the natives the "Eye of Travancore," and one of the main roads from the other coast passes very near the Mission premises. Many of the relations of the reigning Rajah of Travancore reside here ; and among its 64,000 inhabitants, it numbers a large

proportion of Nairs ; and a crowd of Bramins are supported at the public expense. The Syrians, amounting to several thousands, have a richly endowed Church, and are generally in good circumstances ; so that the missionary work in Mavelicarè, both as to the heathen and Christians, lies chiefly among the higher classes.

For twenty years it had been looked upon by the Church Missionary Society as a most desirable situation, but want of funds prevented their occupying it till 1838, when the Rev. Joseph Peet was removed there from Cottayam. Though the Society could not afford to erect a Church, they engaged to build him a house ; but he resolved not to occupy any dwelling of his own till he had in some way or other provided a place for the public worship of God. Difficulties presented themselves on every side, but the blessing of God rested on Mr. Peet's perseverance, self-denial, and industry ; and, aided by the kindness of friends, and often working on the building with his own hands, they were at last overcome. By the help of Mrs. Peet the little building was neatly and appropriately fitted up. The inside was, (with the exception of pews), altogether English ; for a ceiling they had nice white mats ; the floor was covered with the pretty grass mats of the country ; the fronts of the pulpit and reading desk were adorned with crimson cotton velvet, edged with a gold coloured fringe, made by

Mrs. Peet ; the communion table was covered with crimson cloth, and cushions of the same material were placed as in our own Churches. The prettily carved rails in front of the communion table, as well as the pulpit and desk, were stained and varnished, and a small vestry and bell made it quite complete.

Can you not imagine the joy with which Mr. Peet on the 22nd of May, 1839, opened this house of prayer for the worship of Jehovah ? It was indeed a festival day. The missionary brethren from Cottayam and Alleppie, with some of the members of their congregations, were there ; and this "new thing" excited so much attention that, in the course of the day, between 1000 and 2000 people crowded in to see it.

A little before eleven, the bell was rung and the people assembled ; the whole of the morning prayers were read, a sermon preached, and the services of the day were concluded by the administration of the Lord's Supper. Among the communicants were twenty natives of his former congregation, and three Syrians, who had for some time been under instruction, and now openly joined our communion. "The first fruits," says Mr. Peet, "of that great harvest I do hope the Lord Jesus is intending to gather in here." These new converts had much to endure for thus following the convictions of their consciences ; they were immediately excommunicated by order of the Metran ; their fellow Syrians were forbidden to give them fire

or water, or to render them any assistance, nor could they pass through the bazaar without scorn and insult. But not even this bitter and decided opposition could deter others from following their example, and on the following Sunday seven other families publicly joined our Church.

Mr. Peet only intended this building as a temporary place of worship, and lost no time in forming plans for a larger and more substantial Church. A legacy of £300, left by the late Mrs. H. More to the Syrian Mission, has been appropriated to this object; and though this will not be enough to complete the building, he is beginning it at once, trusting that he to whom belong "the silver and the gold," will supply him with the necessary sum. When the new Church is finished, the present building is to be made a school-room.

At the opening of this temporary Church, there was present a Nair of the highest class, who had formerly resided in the Fort, in the midst of Bramins, and near the Rajah's palace. About two years before Mr. Peet went to reside at Mavelicarè, he had met with a copy of Mr. Bailey's Malay-alim Common Prayer Book, and had read it with attention. A Malay-alim New Testament, which he next procured, increased his doubts as to his own religion, and half awakened him to the truth of Christianity. On Mr. Peet's arrival he soon made acquaintance with him, and by God's blessing, on the conversations he had with him, and the means of grace he now con-

stantly attended, he made rapid progress in Divine knowledge. After a few months he publicly declared his intention of becoming a Christian, and the upbraidings and reproaches of his relations, when they found he was in earnest, were so violent that he was obliged to leave his home, and with his wife, who was like minded with himself, he retired to a small house in another part of the town.

The Rajah and Tahsildar hearing of this, sent for him, and expostulated with him on the loss of property and reputation he would suffer ; but none of these things could move him, and he resisted all their arguments and entreaties. Having, however reason to fear personal violence, he concealed himself for some time, till Mr. Peet, satisfied with the trial of his sincerity, consented to baptize him ; and on Sunday, June 9th, 1839, he and his wife were received into the Church by the names they had themselves chosen of Cornelius and Mary. By the law of Travancore, this act deprived him of all his property, except a few paddy fields which could not be alienated ; but Cornelius and Mary had found the true riches ; and that which had been "gain" to them, they now counted "loss for Christ's sake."

Mary had a good natural understanding, but had never even been taught to read ; and after her baptism, feeling anxious to improve, she put herself under Mrs. Peet's instruction ; and every day, as soon as her household work was done, she used to go to the Mission

House to be taught reading and needle-work. As her own soul became more deeply imbued with Divine truth, her anxiety was awakened for the souls of her relations :—she constantly talked to Mrs. Peet about it, and determined at last to make some decided effort.

But the way seemed closed ; she had been cast out from her mother's house on account of her religion, and none of her relations would either venture into her dwelling, nor receive her into theirs. After much consultation and prayer with her husband and a good old man, one of the members of the congregation, it was determined that they should all three go to the town where her family resided, and take lodgings near her mother's house. At first all efforts to gain admittance were unavailing, but the mother's heart could not long resist this proof of her daughter's love, she allowed her to visit her, and by degrees Cornelius and his faithful friend were admitted also.

They had much to encounter, and their patience, love, and prudence were deeply exercised ; but He in whom all fulness dwells, gave them according to their need, and so prospered their efforts, that after a time, the mother and two other female relations agreed to return with them to their Christian home.

Mary by degrees persuaded them to visit Mrs. Peet ; the youngest of them even attended her school, and after some months, the prayer of faith was seen to have prevailed ; to Mary's unspeakable joy, they

all embraced the Gospel, and were baptized on Good Friday, 1841. Another Nair lad was baptized with them ; and after the baptism, to use Mr. Peet's own words, "we assembled with our new friends round the table of the Lord, and found it was indeed a Good Friday to our souls."

I do not know the individual history of any others in the flock at Mavelicarè, but at the Bishop of Madras' late visitation, seventy-six persons were confirmed there ; "some," as his Lordship expresses it, "in the freshness of youth, others with the silvery locks of advancing age."

Mrs. Peet had begun a girls' school as soon after her arrival as possible, and found many parents anxious to have their daughters instructed. Female education is of the utmost importance everywhere in India ; but, if possible, more so in Travancore than elsewhere, for low as the general state of morals is in other places, it is still lower here. One small school is very little in so large a population as that of Mavelicarè, but we know not how far its influence may extend ; and Mrs. Peet thankfully acknowledges the encouragement she has already had in some of her young scholars, who have married, and are going on very satisfactorily. It is remarkable that degraded and ill-used as the women are in every other respect, they have great influence in matters of religion, and Mr. Peet has always found his strongest opponents have been the wives and mothers.

Mrs. Peet has twenty-one girls, six of whom are supported by the Church Missionary Society, the rest by private contributions. The school has lately been much indebted to some ladies in Essex for a very seasonable donation, sent through the Society for Female Education in the East. Two of the children are maintained by the annual subscriptions of a gentleman and lady in Kent, and one by the exertions of the girls of our village Sunday-school, who partly by little acts of self-denial, and partly from the earnings of a small working party among themselves, under the superintendence of two or three teachers, have for the last three years contrived to raise a sum sufficient for her support. Their first little pupil was the child of a converted Bramin ; she was nine years old, and gave Mrs. Peet great hopes of her being under the influence of Divine grace—but about a year ago a sudden illness deprived her of the power of speech, and in a few hours carried her off. Mrs. Peet has chosen another in her place ; and I trust those who have hitherto so willingly assisted in this good work, will not grow weary in well-doing, nor lose their interest in little “ Ali.”

How much may be done by the poorest person, or youngest child, when the heart is in the work ! Ways of earning or of saving money will be contrived ; and I have often been filled with grateful wonder to find how the pence and farthings in the Sunday School Missionary boxes, added to the small sums received for

the work, have from year to year proved enough to maintain their little scholar.

You must not suppose that the Missionary work in Mavelicarè has been carried on without difficulty and opposition. Since Mr. Peet first went there, he has met with the most determined resistance, both from Syrians and heathens. The former are forbidden, on pain of excommunication to enter his church, or to have any intercourse with his people; while the latter, urged on by the Bramins, and supported by the petty Rajah of the place, are constantly annoying and insulting him. Sometimes his work people, or his messengers, have been seized for the service of persons in authority, sometimes they have been beaten because they would not work on Sundays.—Mrs. Peet was railed at for not moving off the road when a Bramin was approaching, and the children, though within their own premises, have repeatedly been driven within doors by the Rajah's servants, lest as he passed, he should be polluted by the sight of "defiled Christians." In short, though the Syrians, Syro-Romans, and Roman Catholics are still suffered to rank among the Nairs, every attempt has been made by the Rajah and his people to degrade Mr. Peet in the eyes of the people, and to reduce himself and his congregation to a level with the lowest of the native population. In one instance, after having been repeatedly requested to visit the Rajah's family, he agreed to go; but on his arrival, found that they

had actually broken a large hole in the garden wall, through which he was to be admitted, that he might not defile the usual entrance ! A short time ago, they endeavoured to prevent communication between the Mission House and the town, by enclosing a piece of the high road adjoining one of their temples, and pretending it was holy. This gave Mr. Peet great difficulty, he knew that if he yielded, the Mission would in fact be at an end, and yet it was dangerous to resist. The Nairs were excited to use violent means to remove him—he was threatened to be poisoned, and a plan was laid to stone him in the dark. His frequent absences from home on Missionary visits were the means under God, of his escaping ; but for many months both he and his family were kept in a constant state of alarm and anxiety. At last his appeal to the government at Trivandrum was attended to, and orders were sent to have the road again opened. The people very reluctantly submitted ; but now arose the doubt whether the goddess Bagawanty, to whom the temple belonged, would prefer giving up the ground so lately devoted to her, or having one of her favourite banyan trees cut down ! Lots were drawn, and the latter was decided on, and Mr. Peet was again allowed free access to the town. Since that time, matters have outwardly been much quieter among the heathen, and a brother of the Rajah's now visits the Mission House to learn

English. One or two others, also, of the family are receiving instruction there.

Lately the Roman Catholics have taken measures against him, but the work of God still prospers ; and Mr. Peet, notwithstanding all his difficulties, has much cause for joy and thankfulness. A very interesting station in this district is "Malapali," it lies among the hills that form the lower range of the Ghauts, where the wild elephant, the tiger, and the cheta roam at will through the almost impenetrable jungle, and not unfrequently assert their right to uncontrolled dominion by trampling down the cultivated fields, and sometimes by carrying off the unwary inhabitants. The traveller who visits it has often no other road than the tracks of the wild beasts, who have forced their way through the thick brushwood interwoven with beautiful climbing plants : and yet, in this spot, apparently too savage for human habitation, has Mr. Peet found a people prepared for the Lord. The inhabitants, partly heathens and partly Syrians, are wild and untutored as their native hills, but frank, open to conviction, and free from that servility of mind which is so common among the natives. Mr. Peet first visited them a few years ago, and placed a native Catechist among them ; by his faithful labours they became acquainted with the truth, and a congregation of 200 has been gathered in, who have remained firm to their christian principles, amidst the unceasing

persecutions from both their Syrian and heathen neighbours.

By means of a subscription among themselves, they began to build a substantial Church; and a small grant from the Church Missionary Society added to the proceeds of a Malay-alim grammar just published by Mr. Peet, has enabled them to finish the Chancel and raise the walls of the body of the Church, sufficiently high to allow of its being used as a place of worship. Further pecuniary assistance is, however, needed, before they can complete the building, and substitute a proper roof for the present one of palmyra leaves. It was opened for Divine worship in September last; the Missionaries from Alleppie and Cottayam attending with several of their congregations.

Could you be transported to Malapâli on some Sunday morning, you would wonder why a Church should have been built in the midst of what appears an almost uninhabited thicket. But as the time of service approaches, your doubts will turn to joy, as you see a goodly number of neatly dressed, cheerful-looking natives, coming up in all directions from the jungle, in which their houses, or rather little farms, lie so hidden as to have escaped your notice. The Church is under the care of a native clergyman, and the attention of the congregation, and the earnestness with which they join in the responses, will fill your heart with thankfulness and hope.

Mr. Peet has, also, small but encouraging congregations at Changanore, and one or two other places ; may the Spirit of God be poured out upon them all, and may the melancholy sound of "Swâmy Iyappen Cherupah,"* now heard from time to time in the

* The Rev. J. Tucker speaking of a visit he paid to Mavelicarè in 1840, says : "Walking one evening through the streets, lined with beautiful trees, I met a succession of groups of men, evidently travellers, carrying on their heads their little earthen pots in which they cooked their food, and their little bundles of rice ; they were proceeding along, one after another, group after group ; not talking among themselves, but all singing one and the same melancholy song. I passed along the street, and went into the Syrian Church, and came out again ; and still there was the same train : hundreds of persons still passing along, singing this melancholy chant. I suppose I walked nearly a mile, and still met the same class of people, with the same song, and their song was 'Swâmy Iyappen Cherupah,' 'Swâmy Iyappen Cherupah.' I shall never forget the sound.

"I inquired from Mr. Peet and the people the history ; and they told me that every year there was a pilgrimage performed to a temple upon the distant beautiful mountains that rise up before the sight, so glorious and so lovely to a Christian's eye. Almost on the summit of one of these peaks is a temple to Iyappen, one of the sons of Siva. In order to get to it, the people have first to pass through a morass, occasioned by the rains that descend from the sides of the mountains and linger there ; they have to pass through the jungle in which there is continual danger of dying by fever, or by the tigers and elephants and snakes that abound in those jungles ; they have to

streets of Mavelicarè be exchanged for "Hallelujahs" to the living God!

I remain,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

clamber over the rocks and ascend the mountain sides to make their offering; and then they come back in self-righteousness, wrapped in a deadly repose of soul, with a kind of indifference and insensibility expressed in their countenance. The song they sung was the same they had sung in their way to the mountains, a month before, and the meaning of it is, 'O, God Iyappen, hear us! O, God Iyappen, hear us!' Surely it was as in the days of Elijah, when the people cried and cut themselves with knives, and for the space of many hours were continually crying to their God, 'O, Baal hear us!' Thus, every year is the cry rising up to an imaginary God; thus do they worship devils; thus do they use vain repetitions.

"But surely if they can take such pains,—if they can make such sacrifices,—if they can show such a spirit of self-denial,—if they can continue instant in prayer under such bondage as this,—the Christian in his glorious liberty as one of the children of God, will be willing, not in a spirit of bondage, but in the spirit of adoption, to be continually crying 'Abba Father!' and to wait upon Him to have mercy on these poor benighted heathens. And shall he not, also, in the same spirit of liberty and the same spirit of adoption count it a small thing to live as one no longer his own but bought with a price? Shall he not count it a small thing to give not of his superfluities, but of his comforts? Yea, to give liberally of his substance; to live a life of self-denial, that he may have to give to them that need it?"

LETTER XIX.

MY DEAR LUCY,

LEAVING Mavelicarè in our covered boat, and descending the Panda into the Backwater, we shall again turn northward, and passing the little river that leads to Cottayam, pursue our course to "*Cochin*." The increased number of Roman Catholic churches,* shows how near we are approaching to the headquarters of Popery in this part of the country; and indeed, Verapoli, the residence of the Vicar Apostolic, supported by Rome in opposition to the Portuguese Archbishops of Goa and Cranganore, is only three hours' row from Cochin. The jurisdiction of the Bishop of Verapoli, extends chiefly over the 85,000 Syro-Romans of Cochin and Travancore; and the one hundred native priests, who minister to them the superstitious ceremonies of Rome, were educated in a college established here for the purpose. But what would you say, were you to go into their library, and there see the stamp of the Inquisition on the New Testament, marking as a "prohibited book," the

* From one spot on the Backwater, seven Roman Catholic churches are to be seen, and only the one English one of Cochin.

charter of our spiritual freedom and the only source of joy and comfort? Yet so it is!

When Cochin first drew the attention of the Rev. M. Thompson and other friends of Missions, it was in a sad state of destitution. The population, composed of the mixed descendants of Portuguese, Dutch, and natives, amounted to 20,000, of whom nearly half were Roman Catholics, and the remainder chiefly heathens, with some Mohammedans. Of the Dutch Protestants only three hundred remained; and this number was fast decreasing, for there had been no chaplain there for several years, and the parents were obliged to have their children admitted into the Church of Rome, or remain unbaptized.

The first Missionary sent out to Cochin by the Church Missionary Society, was the Rev. T. Dawson in 1817, but he was in a few months obliged by illness to return to England;* and for several years Cochin was indebted to the Missionaries at Alleppey and Cottayam, for all the spiritual culture it received.

The Rev. S. Ridsdale was appointed to the station in 1825, and found the ground had been in great measure prepared for him by the successive exertions of Mr. Dawson, Mr. Williams, and the Missionary brethren. The handsome Dutch church which had

* A very active chaplain, the Rev. Mr. Williams stationed there by the Bishop of Calcutta, was also obliged to leave it after a few months' residence.

been suffered to fall into ruins, and had been actually used as a store-house for salt, had been repaired ; the services in it were attended by a good congregation ; and one or two Malay-alim schools had been established. A school had also been opened at Jew Town, about a mile and a-half from Cochin, inhabited by 1500 of God's ancient people,* and was prospering under the care of Mr. Michael Sargon, himself a converted Jew.†

Mr. Ridsdale immediately set on foot a plan that promised much and extensive usefulness, and obtaining a grant of land from Government, invited those persons of whom he hoped well to settle on it. He soon collected round him a little Christian village, consisting of converts from all creeds, but chiefly from Popery ; a seminary was opened for boys, and another for girls, within the compound, and every thing was conducted with the greatest activity and energy.

I cannot enter into details of the various means adopted for the instruction of all around, but there was one regulation of Mr. Ridsdale's that was attended with a peculiar blessing. All who were living within the Mission compound, or had any employment there, were expected to attend the morning worship, where

* Thirteen hundred of these are black Jews.

† Mr. Sargon is still in connexion with the Church Missionary Society, but has removed to Bombay.

Mr. Ridsdale read and catechetically expounded the Malay-alim Scriptures. Scripture readers, school children, and villagers were the constant attendants, to these were added any occasional workmen employed on the premises, and as it was open to strangers you might generally see among the number, heathen of various castes, Jews, Syrians, and Roman Catholics, while not unfrequently even Syro-Roman and Romish priests would venture in. There were always 100, and often 160 present.

While it is to be feared that to many of these occasional hearers this instruction was only a "savour of death, unto death," to others it proved indeed "a savour of life." Among the other workmen, there were at one time two heathen carpenters who had come from a village fifty miles off. Like the rest, they heard the words while there, and returned to their distant homes apparently unmoved; but that Holy Spirit who bloweth where He listeth, had touched their hearts and they could not forget the things they had heard. For a long time they struggled against conviction, but grace at last prevailed and made them willing to give up all for Christ. They returned to Cochin, put themselves under instruction, and were in due time baptized.

Mr. Ridsdale had on his first arrival begun two English services in the Church, and in January, 1826, added one in Malay-alim, but finding Portu-

guese was the most generally understood, he began to study it, and in the following year was able to preach in that language also to a congregation of 300.

In 1829, he was joined by the Rev. S. Lima, a converted Franciscan friar, from Goa ; and with the aid of this devoted and laborious man, the work was carried on with increased power and energy. The number of public services was increased, and the intervals of time were filled up by attending the schools, visiting the congregations, translations, conversations with any who sought for instruction, and excursions to the surrounding villages.

An evident blessing rested on the work, many nominal Christians were led to see and feel the truth as it is in Jesus ; and many heathen, among whom were several of high caste, were brought into the fold of Christ.

Patience and unwearying perseverance were prevailing features in the character of Mr. Ridsdale, and never were they called into more lively exercise than in the pains he took to instruct the lowest and most ignorant of the women. Morning after morning, and sometimes noon after noon, was thus spent ; and often has he turned from an interesting argument with some learned heathen to the labour of teaching over and over again the same simple and important truths to these poor creatures, whom no one else found

capable of learning a sentence, or forming an idea.* Living witnesses remain of the success with which God was pleased to crown these labours of love, but many of these objects of his compassion have entered into rest, giving clear testimony that they had been taught of God.

Among others was Kâlee, a slave of the lowest caste, whose freedom had been purchased by an European gentleman, who was about to proceed with his family to Java, whither Kâlee was to accompany them. To fit her for service she was instructed in needle-work and household duties, but just before the family left Cochin she ran away, and nothing was heard of her for many months. One Sunday, as Mr. and Mrs. Ridsdale were returning from Church, they saw a large black ill-looking figure, with only a few rags for covering, sitting on the steps of the verandah, and recognised the lost Kâlee. She earnestly begged to be taken into the compound, but there was something so forbidding in her whole appearance, that for a moment they paused—till other thoughts prevailed, and they admitted her. Mr. Ridsdale began his usual course of instruction with her, but it was long before any signs of improvement appeared; at last, the light dawned upon her soul,

* No one who has not witnessed it can have any idea of the degradation of women of the lower classes in India, or of the emptiness of mind in those of higher rank.

her heart was subdued to God, and it would have been difficult to trace the miserable, sullen, scarcely clothed "Kâlee" in the humble, patient "Lucy," as in her clean white dress she would sit on the floor listening with fixed attention to every word that fell from the lips of her much loved pastor. She became a regular communicant, and for several years continued to grow in grace, but her health declined, and after a lingering illness she fell asleep in that Saviour who had become so precious to her soul.

The missionary work in Cochin received a severe blow in August, 1835, when, in the middle of the night Mr. Ridsdale was roused from sleep by the intelligence that the roof of Mr. Lima's house had fallen in, and that he, his wife, and child were buried under it. He hastened to the spot, and his heart sickened at beholding a silent heap of ruins. With the assistance of his own people and some sepoys sent by the commanding officer, he began to clear away the rubbish, with a faint hope that his friend might yet be found alive. But in vain—for two hours they worked under a monsoon rain that made the scene still more dismal; and when at last they reached the spot, Mr. and Mrs. Lima were corpses. A delicate little child who was sleeping with them had escaped unhurt, and was taken into Mr. Ridsdale's house.

Again left alone in the work of the ministry, Mr.

Ridsdale did not relax his efforts—assisted by his native Catechists, and by two Syro-Roman Catanârs who had renounced the errors of their church, and become intelligent members of our own, he continued his laborious but blessed work. In the villages round there was an increasing desire among the Syro-Romans for the truths of the Gospel; and could labourers have been sent among them, numbers both of the priests and people would joyfully have put themselves under instruction. But all that could be done was to establish a few schools* here and there, and to place a scripture reader in some of the villages.

The time was now drawing near when in the inscrutable Providence of God, Cochin was to be deprived of its zealous indefatigable minister, and Mr. and Mrs. Ridsdale were to leave for ever a spot endeared to them by fourteen years of trials and mercies, joys, and sorrows, known only by those who have given up all to preach Christ in a far distant land. In 1839, they were obliged to return to England for the benefit of their health; the change considerably restored them both, and they began to look forward to a return to the work in which their hearts were engaged, when in October, 1840, Mr. Ridsdale was seized with an illness, which, in a few days, deprived the Church of India of one of the most devoted of her servants.

* At one of these schools, (at Tripptonitura), two sons of the present Rajah received their education.

When Mr. Ridsdale left India, the Mission was placed under the care of the Rev. H. Harley ; but in consequence of the appointment of a Government Chaplain to Cochin, Mr. Harley has, at his own request, been removed to *Trichoor*, a large town fifty miles further to the north, where his work lies exclusively among the natives. A very promising opening had been made in this place some years before by Mr. Ridsdale ; and a Catechist and Schoolmaster had been stationed here. The district is thickly peopled, chiefly with heathen, though there are a good many Roman Catholics and Syrians. The town contains about 12,000 inhabitants, and is the seat of a famous Sanscrit College for Nambouri Bramins ; which is built partly underground to prevent those without from hearing the instruction given to the pupils. Mr. Harley is active and diligent in his work, and is assisted by one of the Syro-Roman Catanârs employed by Mr. Ridsdale. He has laid the foundation of a Church, but is waiting for funds to finish it.

I have told you nothing of Mrs. Ridsdale's girls' school, for, indeed, I know but few of the particulars of it. I know, however, she was much encouraged in her work, and that many cheered her with the hope that they had learnt to remember their Creator in the days of their youth. Mrs. Harley still carries it on.

Shall you be tired, dear Lucy, if, before I close

this letter, I give you one more instance of the power of the Gospel? Curiatha was a young man of Kunamkullam, a large Syrian town fifty-six miles north of Cochin, where, for many years, Mr. Ridsdale had established a large school, of which the father and brother of Curiatha were the masters. He, himself had some employment at Calicut, but happening to pay a visit to his native place, he met with Mr. Ridsdale, who gave him a copy of the Gospels. Never were they given with less apparent hope of being useful. Curiatha had an eager, intelligent mind, but his habits were eccentric, and his character immoral; he was covetous, worldly, self-seeking. But the Holy Spirit led him to the study of this portion of His Holy Word; in studying it he became another man, and his former worldliness and selfishness were changed into an uncompromising confession of the truth, and a determination to forego all for the sake of his God and Saviour. He boldly proclaimed the name of Jesus to all he met: heathen or Syrian, high or low, Rajah or slave, all were alike to him. Stedfastly refusing all pecuniary assistance, and literally complying with our Lord's directions to His first disciples, * he set out to preach the Gospel in distant places. He traversed the whole of the South of India, even to Madras; and as he had no other support than the bounty of those to whom he preached,

* Luke ix. 3; x. 4.

he must often have endured weariness, and hunger, and thirst, and painfulness ; but none can tell how much he suffered, for Curiatha never spoke of these things ; and it was not till after his death that Mr. Harley discovered he had endured much persecution for the cause of Christ.

After several years of wandering, he returned to Kunamkullam, built a small dwelling in the bazaar, and in that spot where the light of truth had first visited his own soul, he determined to devote his life to the making it known to his fellow-countrymen.

A few months ago he was preaching in the bazaar, when one of his neighbours, unable to endure the pure word of God he was proclaiming, ran home, fetched a knife and stabbed him to the heart.

One short prayer that God would not lay this sin to the murderer's charge, was all that Curiatha had time to utter before his spirit left its earthly tabernacle and joined the noble army of martyrs before the throne of God.

Adieu, dear Lucy,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

LETTER XX.

MY DEAR LUCY,

THERE is only one other Mission connected with the Church Missionary Society in Southern India, the *Teloogoo*—which though as yet in its infancy, promises to be of great importance. *Masulipatam* is at present its only station, and to reach it we must cross the Peninsula through Coimbatore to Trichinopoly, and retracing our steps from thence to Madras, pursue the remainder of our way by sea.

Not many changes have taken place in Madras, since we left it, but one little circumstance has occurred which you will be pleased to hear as a gratifying instance of the influence of the Gospel. Some months ago, Mr. Tucker preached in the Mission Chapel on the subject of the Jews, and made a collection among his own English and East Indian congregation, which was to be sent to Bishop Alexander at Jerusalem. The native Catechists of the *Tamul* congregation belonging to the same chapel* who understand English, and I suppose were present at the sermon, were so much interested

* See Part I., Letter 7.

in the subject, that, entirely of their own accord, they mentioned it to their own people; and these *native Christians*, all of them quite poor, raised among themselves above one hundred rupees (£10.) to be added to the rest, and sent to the "poor Jews at Jerusalem!"

You will remember my mentioning the Teloogoo people in one of my earliest letters,* as a very interesting and intelligent race of people; and if you will take the map of India, and making Masulipatam the centre, draw a semi-circle of which the northern extremity shall reach to Ganjam, and the southern to Pulicat, you will get a tolerably correct idea of the country they occupy. This space is full of populous towns and villages; and the population, amounting to not less than 3,284,000, is exclusively Teloogoo, besides which, a very large proportion of the inhabitants of several other large towns and countries† are also Teloogoo people.

You are ready to ask, what attempts our church has made to spread among these multitudes the knowledge of the Gospel? Alas! till lately, she had done nothing. Masulipatam had been ours for more than eighty years—for above seventy had the Northern

* Part I., Letter 4.

† Cuddapah, Chittoor, Bellary, a considerable part of the Nizam's territory, a great part of Mysore, and Nagpore.

Circars been entrusted to Great Britain ; and yet the London Missionary Society alone had endeavoured to fulfil the highest purpose for which these countries had been given to us. Our own church took no step in this work till some of the English gentlemen residing in the different collectorates, determined to make an effort in behalf of the benighted people round them. The late revered and beloved Bishop Corrie was deeply interested in the cause, and after many disappointments and discouragements, a Mission was set on foot by the Church Missionary Society : two clergymen, the Rev. R. Noble, and the Rev. H. Fox, left England in March, 1841, and reaching Masulipatam in the August following, set hard to work to study the language.

Masulipatam consists of two parts—the *Fort*, standing in an open plain, is about two miles from the sea, inhabited by six or seven thousand natives, some East Indians, and a few Europeans. The *Town* itself is about a mile further inland, and consists of a number of *Pettahs*, (separate quarters,) and villages, joined together and extending two miles in length, and one and a half in breadth ; interspersed with clumps of trees, little gardens, tanks, &c., presenting altogether a very pretty appearance. Part of it is well built, with straight open streets, and part consists of houses and streets separated by narrow winding alleys. There are about twenty pagodas

in the town : and what will you say when I tell you that two of these were built by an English gentleman formerly in office there !

The whole population, including the fort, is calculated at about 90,000 ; of whom a small proportion are Mohammedans, a few Roman Catholics, and a few East Indians. All the rest are Heathens.

You will believe that the Missionaries could not find themselves thus surrounded with idolaters without having their hearts stirred within them ; and a year or two hence we may hope, if it so please God, to hear of at least “ the blade ” and “ the ear ” having sprung up in this, as in the other missions ; but as Mr. Noble and Mr. Fox refrain from all *direct* Missionary work till they are able to speak the language fluently, I have but little to communicate at present. They are, however, able even now to do a good deal *indirectly* ; their frequent opportunities of intercourse with the natives, gives them an insight into their opinions and habits of thinking, and they often find ways of scattering some good seed here and there.

Several of the natives occasionally visit them ; and soon after their arrival, three or four young men who spoke English would frequently spend an hour with Mr. Fox, and read with him the Gospel of St. Matthew, which he explained as they proceeded. They often conversed with him on the subject of

religion, but their questions were more those of curiosity than of any practical tendency, and like most of the young educated heathen they appeared to be fatalists.*

They have found the older natives less pliable than the younger ones ; they are ignorant even of their own religion, and when asked about it will refer to their teachers, who, in their turn, prove as ignorant as the rest. " We do as our forefathers did," appears to some of them a sufficient answer to the strongest arguments, though the more intelligent will take a different course, and try to entangle their opponents in a maze of metaphysical subtleties.

I am sorry to say that Mr. Fox's health has obliged him to leave Masuliaptam for a time, he is now on the Nilgherries, and I trust will soon be able to return to the work he loves. Mr. Noble is still permitted to labour there, and has lately been joined by Mr. P. Gordon, who was educated in the Madras Grammar School, and was afterwards in the Institution.† Mr. Sharkey, one of his fellow students, is also appointed to this station ; and it is fervently hoped they will

* Late accounts speak of one of these young men as giving much ground for hope, he is intelligent and appears sincere, and though, at present, there is no evidence of a decided work of the Spirit on his heart, yet his *opinions* are in favour of Christianity.

† See part I. Letter 10.

both afford valuable assistance to Mr. Noble, and prove useful and devoted Missionaries.

We have now, my dear Lucy, visited all the stations in Southern India belonging to the Church Missionary Society, and I only wish it were possible that the reading these letters could excite in your mind half the interest the preparing them has kindled in my own. The necessity of fixing my attention on the details of each Mission in succession has given a degree of reality to them, which I hope may never pass away, and though I still find it impossible fully to realize the awful state of so many of our fellow-beings lying in the power of the prince of darkness, yet I seem able better to understand how imbued their whole thoughts and affections must be with the pollutions of heathenism, how bound their wills and understandings are in chains of darkness, and I am filled with deeper wonder at the omnipotence of that arm which has delivered so many from this fearful thralldom. I have, too, seen fresh and abundant proofs of the utter helplessness of mere human efforts and human systems ; and that the uncompromising preaching of " Christ crucified," is the only method owned by God to the effectual conversion of a sinner's heart.

But these things I cannot convey to others, and all that I can hope for is, that these brief sketches may lead you to a regular perusal of the published

accounts,* where you will find many more particulars of the different stations, in which I am persuaded you will become increasingly interested, the more thoroughly you are acquainted with the work and progress of each.

You will too, I am sure, thankfully bless God for having put it into the hearts of His servants to form this Society ; and as you read over the names of those with whom it originated, you will rejoice to find among them many on whom you have long looked back with reverence and love.†

For forty-three years it has pursued its undeviating course, through evil report and good report—it has encountered many a storm, but the good hand of our

* The Annual Reports of the Church Missionary Society, also the "Church Missionary Record," the "Missionary Gleaner," and the "Juvenile Instructor," published monthly.

† On April 12th, 1799, the Rev. John Venn, Rev. W. J. Abdy, Rev. E. Cuthbert, Rev. J. Davies, Rev. H. Foster, Rev. T. Fry, Rev. W. Goode, Rev. W. A. Gunn, Rev. R. Middleton, Rev. John Newton, Rev. J. W. Peers, LL.D., Rev. R. Postlethwaite, Rev. J. Pratt, Rev. T. Sheppard, Rev. Thomas Scott, and Rev. C. H. Terrott, first met on the subject, at the Castle and Falcon in Aldersgate ; and in a few days were joined by Sir R. Hill and S. Thornton, Esq. The first Anniversary Sermon was preached by the Rev. T. Scott, the second by the Rev. C. Simeon, the third by the Rev. R. Cecil. One, and only one of all these early friends still remains on earth, to witness even here what God has wrought.

God has still upheld it—many a spirit now beyond the reach of sin and sorrow, has cause to bless God that ever it was established ; and of those who belong to Christ's Church militant here below, there are scattered through the world 6050 communicants, 73,774 attendants on public worship, besides 41,335 of the young in schools and seminaries, who, under God, owe their knowledge of the Gospel to this Society.

Let our endeavours on its behalf be earnest, and our prayers unceasing, that God will continue to pour on all who have the management at home, or the work abroad, the abundance of His Holy Spirit ; “the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge, and of the fear of the Lord.”

And in future days of light, and life, and love, may we be permitted, with “principalities and powers in “heavenly places,” to see somewhat of the power and love, and “manifold wisdom of God,”* in gathering to Himself a Church without spot or blemish, from among the fallen guilty sons of men ; and to adore that grace which has blessed such feeble means to so glorious a result.

Adieu, my dear Lucy,

Yours affectionately,

S. T.

* Eph. iii. 10.

GLOSSARY.

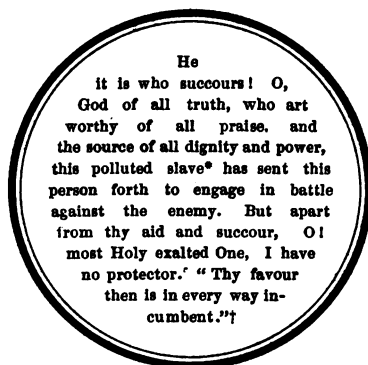
Asâri.	{ A priest of the devil worship in { Tinnevely, &c.
Ayah.	Female attendant.
Bramins.	{ The highest caste among the { Hindoos.
Catamaran.	{ A small raft used in the Madras { roads.
Cavady Coolie.	{ The man who carries the luggage { of travellers.
Choultry.	{ An open building (native) for the { use of pilgrims or travellers.
Chunâm.	{ A kind of mortar or plaster, some- { times so fine as to bear a { beautiful polish.
Compound.	{ The enclosed space round a house, { whether large or small.
Fakeer.	A <i>Mohammedan</i> devotee.
Godowns.	{ Detached buildings used as { offices, storehouses, &c.
Goprum.	{ The high tower belonging to a { pagoda.
Mussalchee.	Torch bearer.
Nawaub.	A <i>Mohammedan</i> ruler.
Olei.	{ A long narrow strip of the pal- { myra leaf, used for writing { upon.
Pagoda.	{ A large Hindoo temple for Bra- { minical worship.
Pariars.	{ The lowest class of Hindoos, who { properly have no caste.
Parsee.	Fire worshipper.
Pei-adi.	Devil dancer.
Pei-arâdanai.	Devil worship.

Pei-coil.	Devil temple.
Peon.	{ An official messenger, porter, &c.
Pice.	A small copper coin.
Piñl.	{ The open kind of shed formed by the projecting roof of a native house, it has a bank of earth running along the wall.
Rajah.	A <i>Hindoo</i> sovereign.
Rupee.	{ The chief current coin in India, in Madras averaging about 2s. in value.
Sany assee Yogee, &c.	A <i>Hindoo</i> devotee.
Sepoy.	{ A native soldier in our Indian army.
Shaster.	{ A book of religious rites and ceremonies.
Soodras.	The caste below the Bramins.
Tashildar	Native Magistrate
Swâmy house.	A small <i>Hindoo</i> temple.
Tom-tom.	A rude native drum.
Traveller's bungalow.	{ A small building erected by Government for European tra- vellers.
Veda.	Sacred book.
Zemindars.	Large landed proprietors.

(A.)

THE COORG MEDAL.

THIS medal was found upon most of the Mohammedan Sepoys in the service of the Rajah of Coorg, who fell in defence of his territories, when invaded by the British troops in 1834. The inscription was in Persian, and may be translated as follows :—



The medal was nearly of this size, it was a composition of zinc and lead, and was worn round the neck as an armlet or charm against the weapons of the "infidel Feringees."

(B.)

The following are translated extracts from a Hindostanee hymn or ballad, a very popular one, sung through South India by the Mohammedans, before and at the time of the Kurnool conspiracy :—

* The Rajah of Coorg.

† Quotation from the Koran.

- " In the name of God, the most merciful.
 " After the glorifying of God, and the praise of the gracious prophet,
 " The pen indites this essay upon warring against infidels.
 " To battle for the faith, and not for the lust of dominion,
 " Is called by the people of Islam in their law—JUHAD.
 " Of the excellence ascribed to this, both in the Koran and in the traditions of the prophet,
 " We now a brief relation give ; and do you take heed.
 " To war against the infidels, O, Mussulmâns, is upon you a divine command,
 " And if you really hold the faith make preparations for it.
 " On whosoever's feet has fallen the dust of war of JUHAD
 " It is a card to liberate him from hell.
 Let a Moslem fight but for a moment in the army of truth,
 " And the garden of the highest paradise becomes meet for him.
 " Hear thou, O brother, the sayings of the prophet,
 " The garden of paradise lies beneath the shadow of the sword."

After a great deal more in the same exciting strain, and many arguments against the love of ease and self-indulgence, worthy of a better cause, the hymn thus concludes.

- " O Lord of heaven and earth ! protector of thy servants !
 " Now speedily grant the Moslem the favour of a JUHAD !
 " Grant them thine own strength ; render the Moslems powerful,
 " Fulfil to them the promise of victory.
 " Thus Oh, king ! let HIND be filled with Islam,
 " Till no other sound be heard but ALLAH ! ALLAH !"

THE END.

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